

SOCIALISM
AND
THE CULTURAL
HERITAGE

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INTRODUCTION

1. THE ESSENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTINUITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WORLD CULTURE	
<i>Historical Continuity—an Indispensable Condition of Cultural Progress</i>	8
<i>The Cultural Heritage Concept</i>	23
<hr/>	
2. THE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF CONTINUITY IN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ANTAGONISTIC CLASS FORMATIONS	36
<hr/>	
3 THE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF CONTINUITY IN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT UNDER SOCIALISM	53
<hr/>	
4. SOCIALISM AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE	
<i>Lenin on the Approach to the Cultural Heritage</i>	65
<i>Socialism and the Scientific Heritage</i>	74
<i>Socialism and the Heritage of Art</i>	90
<hr/>	
5. CERTAIN PROBLEMS OF CONTINUITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIALIST CULTURE AT THE PRESENT STAGE	110
<hr/>	
CONCLUSION	119

Over the past hundred-odd years enemies of communism have persisted in attempts to depict a socialist revolution as barbarous destruction of human culture by riotous mobs. And it should be said that some success has attended their efforts: sometimes even those who appreciate and welcome a socialist revolution with their minds and hearts fear the consequences it may have for world culture. Even Heinrich Heine, who was incomparably more progressive than many representatives of 19th-century bourgeois culture, could not get rid of his dual attitude to communism. "I think with horror of the time when these grim iconoclasts," he wrote of the revolutionary proletariat, "will come to power and ruthlessly destroy all the marble statues so dear to my heart..."*

* Heinrich Heine, *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1959, Vol. 2, p. 439, Russ. Ed.

What filled the great German poet with tormenting doubts throughout his life has now become one of the chief arguments of bourgeois propaganda against Communists.

The very first practical steps of the socialist revolution in Russia, which was a great breakthrough in the sphere of economic and political relations and in the entire spiritual life of mankind, met with unconcealed hostility on the part of advocates of the bourgeois system. "You reject cultural values," "the ignorant populace prevails over the cultural elite," "triumphant Bolshevism... throws the intellectuals and all representatives of culture overboard," wrote the Russian mystic philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev soon after the October Revolution.

It is highly indicative that already at that stage, when the first practical efforts were being made to solve the problem of the cultural heritage, Russian Marxists came up against not only frankly hostile and malicious attacks of this kind but also a lack of understanding among some rather progressive-minded people. Summing up the impressions he gained during his visit to revolutionary Russia, H. G. Wells wrote: "The crude Marxist philosophy which divides all men into bourgeoisie and proletariat, which sees all social life as a stupidly simple 'class war,' has no knowledge of the conditions necessary for the collective mental life."*

Practice, however, is the best criterion of truth.

The fifty-year experience of building a new

H. G. Wells, *Russia in the Shadows*, N. Y. Doran, 1921, pp. 57-58.

society has proved to the whole world that the socialist revolution does not lead to the "collapse of civilization." Soviet cultural progress—which even our ill-wishers cannot but acknowledge—would have been inconceivable without assimilating the valuable cultural heritage of the past.

The experience of cultural development in the USSR and other socialist countries clearly demonstrates that the creative energy of human thought and labour concentrated in the spiritual culture of the past can be drawn on and used effectively in present-day conditions and, moreover, can become an active force for new daring thrusts into the future.

Maximum use of the cultural heritage in a socialist society is becoming a matter of paramount importance in moulding the new man. The attitude to the cultural heritage acquires particular significance in our day in view of the emergence of socialism beyond the confines of one country, the establishment of the world socialist system and the breakdown of colonialism.

The new historical epoch has brought forth a number of new theoretical and political aspects of continuity: the relation of the culture of each individual socialist country to the cultural experience accumulated by the other socialist countries; national-democratic cultural revolutions in the developing countries and their attitude to socialist cultural revolutions; the interrelationships between socialist culture and the culture of contemporary bourgeois society in conditions of peaceful coexistence; the ideological struggle between the two mutually opposed systems, etc. The questions concerning *the attitude to the cultural heritage*, the choice of *what* should be

borrowed from the treasure-store of world culture, and *the way* of utilizing the cultural values created in the distant and near historical past and in present-day capitalist society gain in urgency as the number of countries advancing along the socialist path increases.

The problem of the Communists' attitude to the cultural heritage has acquired special significance in recent years in view of new accusations levelled against Marxist-Leninists.

One of the most common allegations is that by rejecting axiology as a theory the Communists, in effect, reject cultural values as such. Reproaches of this kind are often heard not only from reactionary philosophers and politicians but also from certain progressive representatives of bourgeois culture. Thus, in his *Critique de la raison dialectique* * Jean-Paul Sartre enjoins Marxists not to ignore axiology as a "philosophical theory of man" lest Marxism should be turned into an "inhuman philosophy."

All these accusations and recommendations have a common methodological basis, for their authors deliberately or unwittingly regard the problem of values from the individualist viewpoint. It is obvious that their concern over the "disappearance of human essence from moral values" and the "collapse of personal freedom" due to the assertion of the principles of socialist collectivism and socialist democracy essentially boils down to open defence of individualistic morality and its economic basis in the shape of private property.

* J. P. Sartre, *Critique de la raison dialectique*, Paris, 1960.

Marxists resolutely reject all accusations of "destruction of cultural values" along with the proposals to enrich Marxism with axiology. Marxist philosophy, communist ethics and other component parts of the Marxist-Leninist teaching have at their disposal a sufficiently accurate *scientific criterion* for selecting values of genuinely universal significance from the cultural heritage of the past, and a sufficiently definite *practical approach* to these values.

The purpose of this booklet is to show how Marxism-Leninism *theoretically* treats the question of the essence and significance of continuity in the development of world culture and to elucidate communism's *practical* attitude to the cultural heritage.

1. THE ESSENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTINUITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WORLD CULTURE

HISTORICAL CONTINUITY—AN INDISPENSABLE CONDITION OF CULTURAL PROGRESS

It would not be an exaggeration to say that social progress began to be interpreted by philosophers and sociologists as a law-governed process of social life long before the appearance of scientific communism. Investigating the phenomena of social life, the more advanced representatives of pre-Marxian philosophy and sociology always associated social progress as a general tendency of social development with the law-governed character of historical continuity.

The concept of progress was very aptly expressed by the ancient Roman poet and philosopher Titus Lucretius Carus in his work *On the Nature of Things*:

Old things give way and are supplanted by new
without fail,
And one thing must ever be replenished out
of other things

Matter is needed for after generations to grow;
All of which though will follow thee when they
have finished their term of life. . .

In the 18th century—a period marked by the early bourgeois revolutions—the inseparable connection between social development and historical continuity was emphatically stressed by Herder, Turgot and Condorcet. Historical progress is “the result. . . of development taking place simultaneously among a large number of individuals forming a society,” wrote Condorcet. “But the result discovered at the given moment depends on the results attained in preceding moments and influences those that must be attained in the future.”*

A very interesting and profound interpretation of social progress was given by Hegel who maintained that “the universal raises to each next state of determination the whole mass of its antecedent content, and by its dialectical progress not only loses nothing and leaves nothing behind, but carries with it all that it has acquired, enriching and concentrating itself upon itself. . .”**

It is important to stress that while capitalism was on the upgrade bourgeois ideologists readily acknowledged the law-governed and eternal nature of mankind’s progressive development. But as soon as the “curve” of capitalism began to slide down their views changed radically. “The ideas of progress and evolution,” wrote

* J. A. Condorcet, *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progres de l'esprit humain*, Sotsekgiz, 1936, pp. 4-5, Russ. Ed.

** Quoted from Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 38, p. 231.

Paul Lafargue, "were very much in vogue during the early years of the 19th century, when the bourgeoisie was still enthusiastic about its political victory and the amazing growth of its economic wealth. Progress was the keynote of the writings and speeches by the contemporary philosophers, historians, politicians, writers and poets... But by the mid-19th century their enthusiasm had to be moderated. The emergence of a proletariat in Britain and France made the bourgeoisie apprehensive about its social domination, and progress lost much of its former fascination to the bourgeoisie."*

Yet up to the end of the 19th and even the beginning of this century bourgeois sociologists did not fully realize that the capitalist system was dying away. The socialist revolution in Russia forced them to reconsider questions, which had once seemed quite clear, because the revolutionary practice of the proletariat in power had overthrown all theories proclaiming the possibility of unlimited progress under capitalism. The old theories of social progress gave way to modernized conceptions of cyclic development, social degradation, the inevitable collapse of civilization, etc.

Interpreting the crisis of capitalism as a crisis of mankind, and the collapse of capitalist civilization as a collapse of civilization in general, contemporary bourgeois sociologists have reached a blind alley, for he who says "a" must also say "b": he who denies the progressive course of human history in the present and the future must also renounce the idea that

* Lafargue, *Economic Determinism of Karl Marx*, Moscow. 1928, p. 24, Russ. Ed.

there was progressive development in the past. And this means that the whole chain of the historical process falls apart and the concept of law-governed progress by stages loses sense.

A striking confirmation of this is furnished by Arnold J. Toynbee's many-volume *Study of History*,* in which the author completely ignores the general tendency of social development and reduces the entire history of human society and world culture to a sum of "fully developed," "stagnant" and "underdeveloped" civilizations unconnected by any relation of continuity. Toynbee distinguishes one civilization from another exclusively by the specific features of its spiritual culture.

By regarding world history as a mere sum total of dozens of unconnected civilizations, by absolutizing discontinuity in the development of world culture and reducing its history to that of isolated national cultures exerting no influence on one another, Toynbee completely rejects the idea of world culture as an integral whole. To substantiate his point of view which denies the mutual influence and reciprocal enrichment of national cultures, Toynbee proceeds from the idea of "opposite moral values" in these cultures and, by denying the integrity of world culture, repudiates the idea of historical continuity.

In contrast to bourgeois sociology which proclaims the very idea of social progress to be illogical, Marxism establishes the objective

A. J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*. London, Oxford University Press, Vol. XII, 1961.

laws governing social development and elucidates the role and significance of continuity in the historical process.

According to the materialist conception of history, the objective basis of progressive social development is material production. Marxism seeks and finds the underlying causes of social development and cultural progress precisely in the development of the material *productive forces* and the material *relations of production*.

This does not imply, however, that progress in material production as well as that in the spiritual sphere, is a spontaneous process of social transformation ruling out the conscious activity of man. On the contrary, man is the chief force in this process.

Material production cannot develop unless production experience and other components of the productive forces accumulated in the past are handed down from generation to generation.

The role of historical continuity in the development of productive forces is obvious: in order to perfect production people must improve, before all, their tools and production methods, and this they can do only by relying on previously gained experience. "History," Marx and Engels wrote, "is nothing but the succession of the separate generations, each of which exploits the materials, the capital funds, the productive forces handed down to it by all preceding generations, and thus, on the one hand, continues the traditional activity in completely changed circumstances and, on the

other, modifies the old circumstances with a completely changed activity.”*

Continuity in the sphere of production relations is more involved.

The laws of historical continuity in the development of production relations can be properly understood if it is remembered that the economic basis of antagonistic formations is of a “dual character,”** since besides the relations of domination (classes and groups of proprietors) and subordination (classes and groups deprived of property) it also embraces relations between the producers themselves. Certain stages of world history saw the emergence and disappearance of one or another form of private property. This process was attended by the emergence and disappearance of political and law institutions corresponding to these forms of property. But *all* stages of world history are characterized by the existence and development of the production relations between the workers—the immediate force that carries on the process of production. Their activity provides the permanent economic basis for continuity in both material production and cultural development in *all* socio-economic formations.

Like all the other general sociological laws, the law of social progress has to fight its way through a mass of chance phenomena and finally asserts itself as the ultimate result of an infinite number of interactions.

* Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, p. 59.

** Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy*, Moscow, p. 138.

Hence, it would be wrong to represent progress as a straight, continuous line without breaks, without backward, regressive movements.

The objective tendency of the development of human society is that it follows an ascending line of progress, overcoming relapses and zigzags of all kinds. "History," Lenin wrote, "usually follows a zigzag path and a Marxist should be able to make allowance for the most complicated and fantastic zigzags of history."*

These zigzags are reflected in mankind's spiritual life. The development of culture sometimes turns aside, comes to a deadlock and even stops.

A vivid illustration of this is provided by the spiritual culture of the Graeco-Roman world. Having reached its highest point by the beginning of our era, it began to degrade rapidly as a result of a deep crisis in the slaveowning mode of production and finally fell into decline in the last centuries of the Empire. This was greatly accelerated by the dominating Christian Church which dealt a series of blows to the "pagan philosophy" and "pagan science" of the ancient world. In 390 the Serapeum—an outstanding example of antique culture famed for its library—was pulled down at the insistence of Bishop Theophilus of Alexandria. In 529 Emperor Justinian liquidated the Higher School of Philosophy in Athens—the last centre of ancient scientific thought. Such acts led to the degeneration of scientific thought and to the conversion of philosophy into a

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 13, p. 22.

servant of theology. Similar processes occurred at that time in art and literature.

Only the "seven liberal arts" made up of the trivium (grammar, rhetoric and dialectics*) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy) remained of the great cultural wealth of the ancient world.

This crisis, which began during the disintegration of the Roman Empire, assumed unprecedented proportions under the blows of the Germanic conquerors. The heaviest blow of all was the destruction of libraries, notably the Alexandrian Library with its unique collection of manuscripts.

The barbarian conquests led to a further decline of European culture: teaching the "seven liberal arts" practically ceased everywhere and even elementary literacy became a rarity. When Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, ordered his grandson to learn his ABC, the Gothic nobles vehemently objected, declaring that the only important thing for a Goth was to be able to wield a sword. Education became the privilege of the churchmen. But even among the clergy, especially those of lower rank, it was becoming increasingly rare, for in the 6th-7th centuries the Church dignitaries deemed it their Christian duty to wipe out the last vestiges of secular education.

Yet despite the protracted and disastrously wide-spreading decline in intellectual development in Western European countries during

* The trivium "dialectics" consisted of a number of rules of formal logic.

that period, the objective tendency of social and cultural progress forced its way in the long run.

Certain progress could already be observed during the reign of the Carolingian dynasty. The court aristocracy no longer considered it disreputable to give their children elementary education; the ancient writers and poets were becoming increasingly popular. The new administrative problems arising from Charlemagne's numerous conquests imperatively called for an extension of education among government officials and the clergy. In one of his first capitularies issued in 769 Charlemagne decreed the dismissal of illiterate priests, and in 787 he demanded that the bishops and the monasteries "turn their attention to the study of the sciences by all clergymen according to their abilities." This prompted many monasteries to open schools for training priests and teaching "outside" pupils.

This was the beginning of the rehabilitation of the antique cultural values. Proceeding very slowly in the initial period, it subsequently gained speed.

It should be added that in the history of world culture, as with social history, "leaps backward" are always of a *transitory* and *local* character.

We know, for example, that in contrast to Western Europe (the Western Roman Empire), the study of the ancient authors in Byzantium (the Eastern Roman Empire) continued without interruption. Many of the classics were rediscovered by Europe during the Renaissance period owing to Bysantium, as well as with

the aid of the ancient Persian, Arabic, Georgian and other translations.

The existence in Byzantium of both theological and secular schools is explained by the fact that Byzantine culture was far less dependent on the Church. The schools of higher learning functioning in large Byzantine cities, especially in the Eastern provinces, gave the world many outstanding philosophers, lawyers, orators, experts in grammar, physicians, etc. Every university had a library whose main function was to preserve and transcribe manuscripts.

It is thus clear that the thread of cultural continuity in Byzantium was never broken. Much credit for this goes to the Byzantine lawyers who collected and systematized the entire legal heritage of ancient Rome. A conspicuous part in preserving the cultural heritage of antiquity was also played by the Byzantine philosophers, notably Michael Psellus and Joannes Xiphilinus. Particularly sizable is the contribution made by Michael Psellus (1018-78), a highly educated philosopher well versed in natural sciences, history, philology and poetry. His pupil Joannes Ital devoted his effort to a profound study of Aristotle's philosophy.

Byzantine art, which is intimately linked with that of ancient Greece and Rome, attained its summits during the Middle Ages. Hellenic influence was particularly strong in Byzantine miniature painting which was extremely important as a connecting link between ancient art and the art of the Balkan countries, ancient Rus, Georgia and Armenia.

On the one hand, it is obvious that while spiritual culture declined in Western Europe, the cultural heritage of antiquity was preserved and developed in certain proportions in Byzantium. This preservation and continuation of ancient traditions played a significant part in paving the way for the Renaissance.

On the other hand, one cannot overlook the rapid cultural development (beginning with the 7th century A.D.) of the Arab world, India and China at a time when West-European culture was in a state of decline.

Consequently, in the process of historical development continuity can be both *uninterrupted* and *interrupted* in character. In the former case the cultural assets of the past handed down by one generation to another are constantly used by mankind, being a *living* element of the culture of each historical epoch. In the latter, one or another set of earlier created values temporarily disappear from cultural usage to become only at a later stage again a living element of human culture.

The scale, volume, duration and character of such deviations can differ widely.

1. They involve a greater or lesser number of countries. For example, the conquest of the Kingdom of Judaea by Babylonia held up the cultural development of one of the oldest peoples inhabiting the Arabian Peninsula for a fairly long period, whereas the barbarous policy of the Portuguese, Dutch and British colonialists led to the cultural decline of a whole group of West African peoples, notably the remarkable culture of Benin.

2. They involve a bigger or smaller range of elements of culture. In China, for example, the development of writing was retarded, whereas the peoples of Europe in the early medieval period not only forgot to read and write but consigned to oblivion the entire cultural wealth of the past.

3. Their duration varies widely—from several decades to millennia.

4. They vary in character. Lengthy breaks in cultural development may result not only from the destruction or oblivion of already attained results but also from a certain gap which sometimes occurs between the theoretical knowledge acquired in the process of cultural development and its practical application. Thus, Archimedes' law on which modern shipbuilding is founded was formulated long before our era, but was consciously applied in practice for the first time only nineteen centuries later—in 1866.

Needless to say, interruptions occurring in historical continuity cannot be attributed exclusively to socio-political causes, for, however important these may be, there are other factors too. For one thing, when investigating the intermittent character of connections in cultural development, account must be taken of the contradictory character of cognition and other specific gnosiological aspects. The connection in the development of ideas as such (which, for example, impelled the materialist philosophers of the 15th-18th centuries to renounce the dialectical concepts expounded by the materialists of the ancient world) is just as indisputable as the connection between the

social and cultural processes in medieval Europe.

However, in the final analysis the laws of social progress are bound to triumph: sooner or later the temporarily retarded development is resumed, the "leap backward" gives way to "leaps forward."

The same is true of the development of world culture which overcomes reverses in its advance along the road of progress.*

As a requisite of social progress, historical continuity in the sphere of spiritual culture differs basically from historical continuity in material production.

What is the substance of this difference?

1. Inasmuch as the development of material production forms the basis of the entire social development, the material culture of society, despite any "leaps backward" occurring in one or another of its most important elements, continues to exist and develop even in conditions of stagnation in political life or spiritual culture. Even in the darkest periods of human history marked by the triumph of reactionary political forces and protracted interruption or complete cessation of the development of spiritual culture, when many cultural values

* It should be borne in mind that the concepts of "progress" and "regress" are relative in character. While regarding the rejection of dialectics by the materialist philosophers of the 17th-18th centuries as regress, we clearly realize that the domination of metaphysics during that period "had its historical justification" and was related with a definite stage in the progressive development of natural scientific knowledge and with a qualitatively new stage in the progressive development of materialism itself.

were lost to whole generations, the development of material culture, as a rule, did not stop for a long time though it proceeded more slowly. This is only natural, for complete collapse of material production would cause the end of society itself.

Nor is it possible to carry on production, albeit on a limited scale, without making use of the productive forces, production experience and other elements of production inherited from preceding generations.

A different situation obtains regarding spiritual culture where, by virtue of its innate specificity, many objects d'art, works of literature and other spiritual assets can be lost irretrievably, where breaks in development are at times felt more acutely and last longer and in some cases assume a catastrophic character.

2. Whereas continuity in the economic development of society is based on objectively existing material conditions and people cannot realize it otherwise than by participating in the established process of material production, continuity in the sphere of spiritual culture is impossible unless the people assess the spiritual values handed down to them, unless they define *their* attitude to these values. In this sense continuity in spiritual culture, in contrast to continuity in material production, *always* depends on social consciousness.

This does not mean, however, that the laws governing the development of spiritual culture are not objective in character. When a scientist, artist, etc., determines his attitude to the cultural heritage of the past, he is chiefly concerned with cultural assets already created.

Even more important is the fact that although the assessment of these values and the tendency and character of their utilization in the creative process are determined "freely," they depend in the final analysis not on the subjective will or desire of the individual but on the objective laws governing the development of society, on the problems of the given historical epoch, and on the needs of definite social forces whose interests are consciously or unconsciously furthered by this individual.

3. In contrast to continuity in the sphere of material production, continuity in the development of spiritual culture can be both progressive and reactionary in character. This specific feature is determined by the class character of culture in a class society, by the influence of social contradictions on the processes taking place in the spiritual life of an antagonistic class society.

4. Another aspect of great significance for a proper understanding of the specific features of continuity in the development of spiritual culture is that utilization of cultural assets, in contrast to that of material assets, does not lead to annihilation of the cultural assets in question. On the contrary, the same cultural assets which have served mankind for centuries often find new applications and, consequently, acquire greater significance.

It should be emphasized that in the course of social progress the relation between continuity in material production and that in spiritual culture alters substantially.

In conditions of primitive society the slow rate of accumulation of the material values

necessary for further intellectual progress of society corresponded to the extremely low level of material production, the development of which was hampered by inadequate knowledge and experience. The development of society at the dawn of human history was largely influenced by geographical environment; with the progress of technology and the growth of productive forces natural conditions began to play lesser role. As man learnt to subdue nature, culture began to develop more rapidly and its forms became more complex and varied. The role of continuity in cultural development increased accordingly; in developed social structures the progress of spiritual culture began to depend to an increasing degree not only on the *rate* of development of material production but also on the level of cultural development, on the character of the cultural assets already created.

Of course, the material factor continues to play the *dominant* role, but the reciprocal influence of diverse components of culture on the material life of society increases.

THE CULTURAL HERITAGE CONCEPT

The cultural heritage is a fundamental concept of Marxist-Leninist theory on culture. Though closely related with a number of other categories (cultural values, traditions, innovation, continuity, etc.), this concept has its own limits, content and significance.

Despite its close relation with the category of continuity, the concept of heritage in culture differs essentially from the latter.

Continuity, which manifests itself in nature and in social and intellectual life as an indispensable objective link between the old and the new in the process of development, is a *general philosophical* category. Connecting the object and the subject of negation, continuity serves as a logical detector of the dialectical unity of the discontinuous and the continuous, of similarity and dissimilarity in the development of matter in motion. For this reason, continuity is of great methodological importance for all sciences without exception, social and natural alike.

The cultural heritage concept, which relates only to processes in the sphere of culture (more commonly, spiritual culture), is far narrower in scope.

The important point, however, is that the cause of the non-conformity of these categories should be sought primarily in the *social nature* of spiritual culture.

Spiritual culture cannot be regarded as a mere aggregate of spiritual values, i.e., the sum total of the results of the spiritual activity of preceding generations. What really makes culture is *man's creative activity* as a result of which these spiritual values are produced.

But the process of spiritual production, like that of material production, is characterized by manifold relations, and the culture of each new formation is necessarily bound by firm ties of continuity to the *sum total of relations which emerged earlier in the sphere of spiritual culture*.

Since all forms of social consciousness (and, accordingly, all concrete forms of spiritual pro-

duction relations) as component elements of spiritual culture are relatively independent in reflecting reality (since they reflect different aspects of life by different means in accordance with their specificity), their development cannot be directly deduced from economic laws. In other words, within the limits of ultimately unavoidable dependence on the material life of society, spiritual culture develops in conformity with its immanent laws. This is manifested specifically in the fact that individual components of culture in the form of definite cultural gains, as well as the pattern of spiritual ties engendered by specific historical conditions, may lag far behind the changed economic basis.

Hence, during the transition to a new historical epoch some remains of the old pattern of spiritual ties and relations, which may prove not only useless but even harmful, survive and continue to exist for a certain period in the spiritual life of society side by side with those spiritual values and relations which are beneficial for new generations.

Inheritance of the spiritual wealth presupposes a *struggle* against such survivals as undesirable manifestations of historical continuity, for it is not confined to mere acquisition of the entire legacy.

The cultural heritage is always examined with regard to the possibility of its *practical application by definite social groups* (classes, nations, etc.), *by whole generations* and, in a broader sense, *by new socio-economic formations*. Hence, of the cultural heritage, part is fully retained and utilized, part is somewhat altered,

re-examined or completely rejected.

The cause of the non-conformity of continuity and inheritance should also be sought in the *gnosiological nature* of spiritual culture.

As regards its amount and character, knowledge possessed by every historical epoch can be tentatively divided into three unequal parts:

- a) absolutely authentic knowledge;
- b) relatively authentic knowledge;
- c) absolutely unauthentic knowledge.

Absolute truth is evolved in the process of the development of human knowledge. The cultural values of science, philosophy, art, ethics, etc., inherited by each succeeding generation always contain certain elements of absolute, everlasting significance. No matter what the future of the development of culture may be, mankind never relinquishes absolute truths evolved earlier.

Since the world is infinite in its development, the process of cognition always follows an ascending line, advancing from the lower to the higher. Every landmark in the process of cognition always proves to be historically transient, and every grain of absolute truth discovered by mankind is a particle of relative truth. "Dialectical materialism," Lenin wrote. "insists on the approximate, relative character of every scientific theory,"* "on the temporary, relative, approximate character... of all *milestones* in the knowledge of nature gained by the progressive science of man."**

* Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 14, p. 261

** Ibid., p. 262.

Relative truth embraces, apart from grains of absolute knowledge, hypotheses (which may or may not grow into scientifically substantiated theories), conjectures (which may prove justified in part of absolutely groundless) and sheer fantasies and surmises (especially at the early stages of knowledge). Consequently we discover, when studying continuity in the development of culture, not only the permanent, stable connections between absolute truths attained at earlier and later stages of human history but also temporary, transient connections between the given relative truth and the given absolute truth, between various relative truths and between all the components of relative truth generally.

In the most paradoxical form this connection is revealed between scientific knowledge which has the significance of absolute truths and unscientific propositions which are completely discarded in the course of progressive cultural development as utterly insolvent.

In Soviet philosophical literature devoted to research into the problem of continuity in the development of spiritual culture attention is usually focussed only on the positive connections resulting from the inheritance of positive knowledge contained in the cultural values of the past.

The significance of positive connections in the process of inheritance is indisputable. In combination, these stable connections form, as it were, the framework of the whole edifice of world culture in its unceasing progressive development.

Way back in antiquity materialist philoso-

phers came to the conclusion that the world was not created by men or Gods, that it existed eternally and was always in the process of change. Many centuries have passed since then, but the contemporary materialist, drawing on modern scientific discoveries and possessing incomparably greater knowledge than the materialists of the ancient world on matter and its properties, on motion as the attribute of matter, etc., still proceeds from the premise of the uncreatability and indestructibility of the constantly changing material world.

Every particular science also has its own absolute truths, its own precise and tested in practice knowledge of the processes and laws inherent in one or another form of motion of matter. Continuity of this kind also exists in the realm of art.

It would be wrong to believe, however, that continuity in the development of culture is realized only in the form of assimilating already existing achievements, of critically utilizing only the positive content of the spiritual values created by preceding generations.

G. V. Plekhanov must certainly be given credit for emphasizing, in developing the ideas of the founders of Marxism on the relative independence of ideology, that the "state of mentality in any given period can be understood only alongside the state of mentality in the preceding epoch."* He also pointed out that "...the ideology of each given period is always in the closest positive or negative rela-

Plekhanov, *Sel. Philosophical Works*, Vol. 1, p. 666, Russ. Ed.

tion with the ideologies of the preceding periods."¹

The point stressed by Plekhanov is of fundamental significance. All scientific research into the processes involved in the development of spiritual culture should be based on a careful examination of not only the positive connections and positive achievements of the preceding epochs which stimulated the progress of world culture but also the negative factors. It may be confidently asserted that these negative factors often prove no less important for the development of world culture than the positive ones. Furthermore, the accumulation of positive knowledge would be impossible without overcoming mistakes and delusions encountered on the thorny and tortuous path of scientific progress.

Many examples can be cited when one or another scientific concept or theory considered axiomatic for centuries was completely disproved by the subsequent development of world culture.

However, this can hardly warrant the conclusion that the hypotheses rejected while knowledge was being accumulated played no positive part in the advance of spiritual culture.

An illustration of this is provided by the caloric theory which was subsequently rejected by science. Though essentially erroneous, this theory played a definite part in the development of positive knowledge. The numerous experiments carried out in testing the caloric theory which ultimately proved it untenable brought

* Plekhanov, *Sel. Philosophical Works*, Vol 1, p. 666, Russ. Ed.

Sadi Carnot to his conclusions which formed the basis of the first law of thermodynamics, while the extensive experimental data gleaned by physicists suggested a number of ideas which later led to the discovery of the law of conservation and transformation of energy.

Among other examples are the geocentric Ptolemaic system, the medieval alchemy and the idealist conception of history.

It follows from the aforesaid that the study of the problem of historical continuity in the development of world culture, including the analysis of its laws and concrete forms of manifestation, cannot be confined to investigating the various aspects of positive continuity alone.

Such a one-sided examination is apparently due to insufficient elaboration of the question concerning the operation of the dialectical law of negation of the negation in the spiritual life of society. Yet negation in the sphere of ideas essentially differs from negation in nature where, owing to the operation of the law of conservation of matter, the law of conservation and transformation of energy, etc., absolute negation is ruled out. Even when negation does not serve as a condition for the development of the *given* object or phenomenon ("futile" or "unnecessary" negation), not a single element of the given material structure disappears completely as a result of such "futile" negation but joins the general process of development of the material world. Negation in nature is always relative in character: in one respect it means a cessation of development (of the *given* phenomenon), in another respect, taking into account the infinite variety of interrelations and interactions of the

material world, it becomes an indispensable condition of development (of *other* phenomena). Consequently continuity in the development of *material* objects can be *only positive* in character.

In the sphere of thinking, however, negation can acquire an *absolute character*.

The reflection of the material world in the human mind is a process which implies the possibility of divorcement from reality, of forming a distorted picture of reality and, consequently, of the emergence of such generalizations which may prove not only partially but completely unscientific, without containing even the minutest grain of absolute truth. Parallel with this gnosiological possibility of giving a distorted picture of the world, in every class society there always exist social reasons for distorting reality in furtherance of definite class interests, as well as social forces realizing this possibility.

This means that, unlike negation in the material world, which cannot be complete or absolute and which *necessarily* includes an element of positive continuity, in the development of consciousness there is no need to seek something positive in any hypothesis or generalization. A hypothesis can prove absolutely untenable; moreover even a whole branch of knowledge may prove utterly groundless.

Does this mean that all hypotheses and "laws" not containing grains of absolute truth are inconsequent for the progress of human knowledge? Of course not.

In the first place, the researcher, while testing one or another idea with a view to proving or disproving it, obtains new factual material which

can furnish the basis for important discoveries. The caloric theory is a case in point. We can also mention in this connection the many valuable discoveries resulting from the fruitless attempts to carry into practical effect the absolutely unscientific "perpetual motion" theory.

In the second place, even an absolutely irrational theory can give an impetus to the continued progress of scientific knowledge by *the very fact of its appearance*. Suffice it to recall the "law" of Malthus. To disprove the reactionary conclusions following from this law, Marx thoroughly investigated the problem of the productive power of the Earth and, as Engels put it, found in the Malthusian theory "the weightiest economic arguments in favour of social transformation."^{*}

Many other examples of this kind could be cited. The entire history of the development of mankind's spiritual culture is the history of the struggle of materialism against idealism, science against religion. In the course of this struggle materialism found ever new arguments against idealism, and science new and more effective arguments against religious views.

This enables us to speak of a *specific form of continuity* which is based not on a critical reappraisal and utilization of the positive achievements accumulated by preceding generations but on complete negation of the earlier results achieved in the development of spiritual culture. This is a form of connection between the

Marx and Engels, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 1, p. 567, Russ. Ed.

new and the old in the development of spiritual culture which *implies complete repudiation of the old by the new without taking anything from the old stock.*

To distinguish it from *positive* continuity (retention and development of the positive results accumulated by preceding generations), continuity of this kind can be called *negative* continuity insofar as its sum and substance consists in reaching new conclusions intended to *counter* already existing ones. But this negative continuity lies beyond the bounds of the "inheritance" concept.

When analysing the essence of the continuity and inheritance concepts, one cannot disregard a whole number of *social causes* determining both the content and the tendency of cultural continuity.

Inasmuch as spiritual culture in a class society necessarily assumes a distinctive class tinge, its development does not necessarily, at all times and in all forms, acquire a universal significance. The ruling classes in antagonistic formations show a very definite attitude to the cultural values of the past, accepting not only that which is objectively necessary but also those elements from which they stand to gain subjectively (for instance, reviving Thomas Aquinas's doctrine in our day). In this context we can speak of both *progressive* and *reactionary* continuity. At the same time the oppressed classes (especially the proletariat) have, during the social revolution, to examine all cultural values of the past from the class point of view so as to sort out and discard the reactionary

dross accumulated in the course of mankind's cultural development and to single out for practical use and further development only those cultural values which, because of their content and significance, belong to the whole of mankind.

The process of cultural development is extremely complex and contradictory. On the one hand, an important part here is played by traditions and historical continuity, while on the other, as Lenin pointed out "guarding the heritage does not mean confining oneself to the heritage."* With the advent of a new historical epoch mankind critically re-examines the cultural heritage of the past, complementing, developing and enriching it in view of the new possibilities and tasks confronting society, and bringing it into conformity with the needs of definite social forces.

The cultural heritage cannot be regarded as something immutable: the culture of any historical epoch always, at each given moment, *assimilates and creates the cultural heritage*. As was stressed in a resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the French Communist Party at its plenary meeting devoted to problems of ideology and culture (Argenteuil, March 11-13, 1966), "...cultural heritage should not be interpreted as the sum total of creative works of the past, from which one has only to remove the dust and adapt them to present-day tastes. Where then does the present begin? The cultural heritage is created day by day. It has always been created in the present. It is precisely the

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 2, p. 526.

present that becomes the past, i.e., the heritage. . .”*

Summing up the foregoing, we can now give a definition of the cultural heritage concept.

In a broad sense *cultural heritage* should be understood as the *totality of the connections, relations and results of spiritual production* of the preceding historical epochs; more specifically, it is *the total amount of cultural values left to mankind by preceding generations*, which, after critical examination and evaluation, must be further developed and utilized in conformity with the current historical problems and the objective criteria of social progress.

L'Humanité, March 15, 1966.

2. THE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF CONTINUITY IN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN ANTAGONISTIC CLASS FORMATIONS

Owing to the operation of the laws of class struggle, social revolution, objective historical tendencies in the development of national movements and other specific laws typical of socioeconomic formations founded on relations of private ownership, the whole history of class society represents a series of social cataclysms, bitter class battles, national strife, wars of attrition between individual states and groups of states, severe economic and political crises, etc. In this situation social progress, although gaining speed with each new formation, has been comparatively slow and remarkably uneven in character.

These specific features of social progress in antagonistic class formations naturally leave their imprint on the development of culture, its

general progressive tendency and, consequently, cultural continuity assuming a highly contradictory character.

One of the basic contradictions of cultural progress in an antagonistic class society is that the development of culture in every given class formation has its insuperable and unavoidable limits, and, at a certain moment, comes to its negation. When the prevailing social relations become an impediment to further progress of society, its culture is no longer able to move forward within the old historical forms. Such periods are marked by a particularly active development of negative, regressive cultural phenomena—elements of cultural stagnation and decay become plainer to see.

The antagonistic nature of production relations in a class society also determines another basic contradiction characteristic of cultural development in these conditions, namely, the extremely uneven distribution of cultural values between different classes and social groups.

Inasmuch as the antagonistic class society is characterized primarily by the existence of two main classes determining the historical type of the given relations of production—the two classes between which passes the basic line of the contradictions inherent in this type of production relations—the antagonistic relations between these classes affect all spheres of the cultural life of the society and, in the final analysis, penetrate all forms of social organization and social consciousness. At the same time one cannot ignore the existence of non-basic classes in all antagonistic formations: classes which either remain from the old formations or, emerge in

the given society as representatives of a new, nascent formation. It should be obvious that their existence and struggle for their "place under the sun" also finds reflection in diverse spheres of the society's cultural life.

In this sense, culture in antagonistic class formations always assumes a class character, for it should not be forgotten that "the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class, which is the ruling *material* force of society, is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force."* This class character of culture is manifested, first of all, in its *ideological content*.

Definite ideological class influences can be found in all forms of social consciousness existing in antagonistic formations, and, moreover, not only in the political and juridical spheres where their manifestation is always particularly pronounced, but also in ethics, art, science and philosophy.

On the other hand, the working, exploited people themselves become increasingly conscious of their place in society. They evolve their own ideology and oppose it to the ideology of the ruling classes.

In the second place, the class character of culture is manifested in its social function and *practical application*.

Apart from ideology as such the ruling classes set up a whole system of political, legal and other institutions which represent, so to speak, the material embodiment of this ideology. They

* Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1964, p. 60.

strive to use all cultural achievements to further their own class interests.

As the class struggle becomes more acute and better organized, especially in the epoch of capitalism, the exploited masses increasingly oppose their ideology and their organizations to their class enemies.

Thus the working class of Russia, long before the revolution, evolved its ideology, founded its political party and began to create its proletarian literature represented by Maxim Gorky, Alexander Serafimovich, Demyan Bedny and other progressive writers.

"There are two national cultures in every national culture," Lenin wrote in this connection in his *Critical Remarks on the National Question*. "There is the Great-Russian culture of the Purishkeviches, Guchkovs and Struves—but there is also the Great-Russian culture typified in the names of Chernyshevsky and Plekhanov. There are *the same two* cultures in the Ukraine as there are in Germany, in France, in England, among the Jews and so forth."*

While pointing to the existence of these two cultures, Lenin at the same time stresses that one of them, engendered by the conditions of life of the toiling and exploited masses, exists in the shape of *more or less developed elements*, whereas the other, bourgeois culture exists "in the form of not merely 'elements,' but of the *dominant* culture."**

Indeed, it is the culture of the monopoly bourgeoisie that predominates in the capitalist coun-

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 20, p. 32.

** Ibid., p. 24.

tries. Its political ideologists vehemently oppose communism and defend neo-colonialism, its philosophers preach all kinds of idealistic and obscurantist theories, its writers try to divert the reader from living reality with its acute problems and contradictions to the world of dreams and illusions, its artists move farther and farther away from the progressive traditions of realism.

Many representatives of contemporary bourgeois culture, however, find themselves at a crossroads. They are trying to reflect in their art the peoples' urge for peace and social progress. Well to the fore among these forward-looking personalities are Jean-Paul Sartre, an active participant in the peace movement, humanist writers Graham Greene and Heinrich Böll, outstanding film producer Federico Fellini, eminent scientist and founder of quantum mechanics Louis de Broglie, and many other workers in the field of art, science and education.

Although all these exponents of the democratic trend in the spiritual life of the contemporary capitalist world may differ in the character of their activity, in their views and significance, they must be singled out as a special group who no longer follow in the wake of the dominant culture. They may be still wavering and acting spontaneously, but the important thing is that they have already joined the struggle for social progress. It is not precluded that some of them will subsequently shift to the right as happened not so long ago with Jules Romains, but the majority will undoubtedly remain true to their lofty civic duty. The renowned artist Pablo Picasso and the prominent thinker Kenjuro Yana-

gida have already sided with communism, as Anatole France and Theodore Dreiser did in their time.

A new type of proletarian culture has emerged and is successfully developing in the contemporary capitalist world. Particular mention should be made of the new progressive literature represented among others, by Henri Barbusse, Martin Andersen Nexö, Bertolt Brecht, Louis Aragon and Paul Eluard.

But this should not be taken to mean that the *entire* culture with *all* its components has a class character.

It is essential, in this connection, to draw a line of distinction between material and spiritual culture.

Material culture, which embraces: a) means of production; b) production experience gained in the labour process; c) material products or material values manufactured in the process of production, *cannot be viewed as a class category in its entirety.*

Means of production (implements, production buildings, means of transport and communication, power resources, warehouses, etc.) and experience gained in the process of production (production methods, techniques and technology) cannot assume a class character for the simple reason that they can be equally used by all classes.

The matter is somewhat more complicated with regard to the material results of production since *some* of the products are created to satisfy the requirements of definite classes. No special effort is required to discern certain class features in some objects of labour (even in

clothing, footwear, etc.) or in material relics of this kind (pyramids, palaces, temples). But, first of all, it should be noted that material monuments (architectural, for example) belong not only to the sphere of material production but also to that of spiritual culture, for no one can deny their vast esthetic influence on man, their significance as a form of art.

Hence, one has probably every justification to refer to a distinctive class imprint on material culture, but *on the whole, taken in its clearly defined qualitative aspect*, material culture cannot be regarded as a specifically class phenomenon.

Material production is the basis of social life, an indispensable condition for society's existence and development *irrespective* of the presence or absence of classes and class struggle in the given formation. Needless to say, it feels the impact of this class struggle, it can develop at a faster or slower rate depending on the pattern of production relations, but its components are essentially indifferent to classes and bear a *universal character*.

Hence the irrefutable conclusion is that every new generation and every new formation regardless of its class structure, inherits means of labour and production experience accumulated in the past, as well as earlier created material values. Without this inheritance, without continuity in relation to *all* basic components of material culture there can be no progressive development of production and, consequently, no progressive development of society.

Subjectively, people may fail to understand this, their actions may sometimes retard the de-

velopment of production (as, for instance, when a capitalist buys a patent for an invention and is prompted by business considerations to "pigeonhole" it); they may oppose technical progress by breaking machines (the Luddite movement), artificially hamper automation of production, etc., but *objectively* society cannot develop without perfecting its material basis. And this, in turn, presupposes wide-scale utilization of all past achievements of the entire production experience accumulated by preceding generations.

If at one or another stage of history material production suffers considerable damage, this cannot be attributed to the deliberate actions of definite classes, to their desire to disrupt or deform the social process of production. In most cases such damage is caused either by protracted wars (both civil and between states) or by economic crises. But whatever the extent of the damage caused, production does not cease, for its complete cessation would spell the doom of society as a whole.

For this same reason *all the classes*—each in its own way, it is true—are *objectively* interested in perpetuating and developing the attained level of productive forces.

Since it is impossible to discontinue production for any lengthy period, this can only mean that *in the sphere of material culture continuity is always progressive in character*. Inheriting the instruments of labour from the preceding generation, people always try to improve them; consciously or unconsciously, they take from the store of accumulated experience only that which can yield maximum effect.

Continuity in the sphere of spiritual culture is

something different, its class character manifesting itself as the most typical, intrinsic feature. For this very reason, in our view, the formula "culture in a class society bears a class character" ought to be amended with the reservation: "spiritual culture."

It is quite obvious that referring to the existence of two cultures in every national culture, Lenin had in mind precisely spiritual culture.

The basic trend in the development of spiritual culture is determined *directly* by the class interest: each of the contending classes tries to make the best use of all its components to further its own class interests. This class tendency permeates all spheres and aspects of spiritual culture, determining its ideological content.

Although governing the development of all forms of spiritual production, ideology does not coincide with them in scope. Culture—the sum total of a number of social phenomena from ethics and law to science, art and philosophy—is, of course, a more *general* term than ideology.

A vivid illustration of this is provided by science—a highly important component of spiritual culture. Every science has its objective, essentially non-class, universal meaning.

Universal meaning, naturally to varying extent, is found in the art, morality and philosophy of every epoch; in effect, it is present in the spiritual culture of *every class*. It is precisely here that the law of continuity primarily manifests itself: society *inherits and further develops the universally significant elements existing in the spiritual culture of any socio-economic formation irrespective of the class structure*.

The attempts to counterpose the class charac-

ter of spiritual culture to continuity which is typical of all vulgarizers of Marxism, chiefly stem from a *non-historical approach to culture*.

Correctly speaking, there can be no "culture in general" just as there is no "formation in general" or "classes in general." Culture is an historical phenomenon which develops with society. Consequently changes taking place in the position of the various classes comprising the given formation inevitably influence the development of culture.

As long as the prevailing relations of production play a progressive role at certain stages of social development, especially in the early period of one or another antagonistic formation, and accelerate the development of the productive forces, the ruling class represents a progressive force of social development. It would therefore be wrong to assert that the spiritual culture of the dominant class is always reactionary in character regarding its ideological essence and practical application.

Historical experience proves that many ideas put forward by representatives of the dominant culture prove to be of everlasting significance and universal value.

In the period of its rise and development bourgeois ideology reflected the interests of an advanced, revolutionary class which was tackling the urgent objective problems of historical progress. At that time bourgeois ideologists, philosophers, scientists and artists created many outstanding cultural assets in which mankind takes legitimate pride to this day. At the time of the early bourgeois revolutions, bourgeois ideologists were far from de-

fending exclusively the selfish interests of their class, as most representatives of bourgeois ideology were to do later on. Lenin repeatedly pointed to the serious danger of vulgarization resulting from a non-historical juggling with the term "bourgeois" ("bourgeois ideology," "bourgeois culture," etc.) "...This word," he wrote, "is often understood very incorrectly, narrowly and unhistorically, it being associated (*without distinction of historical period*) with a selfish defence of the interests of a minority. It must not be forgotten that at the time when the eighteenth-century enlighteners (who are by general consent included among the leaders of the bourgeoisie) wrote, and at the time when our enlighteners of the forties and sixties wrote, *all* social problems amounted to the struggle against serfdom and its survivals. At that time the new socioeconomic relations and their contradictions were still in embryo. No selfishness was therefore displayed at that time by the ideologists of the bourgeoisie; on the contrary, both in the West and in Russia, they quite sincerely believed in universal well-being and sincerely desired it, they sincerely did not see (partly could not yet see) the contradictions in the system which was growing out of serfdom."*

Hence, the fact that certain elements of the spiritual culture of preceding epochs outlasted their time and became the property of subsequent generations can in no way be attributed to their non-class character. They were able to survive because they contained elements of

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 2, pp. 505-06.

objective truth, correctly reflecting certain aspects of reality. To counterpose the objective content of any ideology to its class character is to indulge in vulgarization. Ideology bears a class character insofar as it interprets the world from definite class positions. The point therefore is whether this class position does not prevent the *correct* interpretation of reality.

It may be recalled that in certain historical epochs there were classes which although exploiting by nature, played a progressive role and held advanced views, their class position not preventing them from an objective approach to the problems of social progress. This was the case with the 18th-century French bourgeoisie. It is precisely for this reason that many spiritual values, despite their bourgeois essence, objectively acquired a significance that transcended the limits of one class and one epoch.

Thus, even those elements of spiritual culture whose class character is fully borne out by their ideological content and tendency appear, when viewed in the historical context, to be subject to the law of continuity.

This does not mean, however, that in going over from one formation to another each new dominant class automatically assimilates all that was valuable in the spiritual culture created by its predecessors.

Cultural workers always approach the cultural heritage from the ideological positions of their class and use it in the interests of this class. Every class draws on past achievements in the sphere of culture not in order to wor-

ship them but to use them in interpreting reality *from its own point of view*, in support of its ideological positions.

The successors' critical attitude to their predecessors has a *universal character* which is confirmed by the entire history of mankind's cultural development.

In one of his letters to Ferdinand Lassale, Marx pointed out that during the reign of Louis XIV the French dramatists distorted, after a fashion, the Aristotelian interpretation of the Greek drama by formulating the rule of the "three unities" of classical drama. This happened so because the French "interpreted Hellenic art in a way which met the requirements of their own art."^{*}

And lastly, the class character of spiritual culture presupposes rather than rules out continuity because the culture of every people in every historical epoch, *in any antagonistic formation is contradictory*, embracing not only the dominant culture but also more or less developed elements of the culture the exploited and oppressed classes create in opposition to it.

It is not difficult to trace two lines of continuity in the development of mankind's spiritual culture. The first line—the slaveowners—the feudal lords—the bourgeoisie—is manifest, above all, in political and legal ideology and, respectively, in political and legal organizations, i.e., in the spheres closest to the economic basis. The exploiting essence common to all ruling class ideologies makes it inevitable

* Marx and Engels, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 30, pp. 504-05, Russ. Ed.

that there should be continuity in the spiritual cultures serving these classes in all spheres. For this same reason social revolutions taking place in these formations do not call for the destruction of the state apparatus; they merely improve it to meet the requirements of the new exploiting classes. Equally logical is the fact that each of these classes, initially drawing—in proportion to the progressive historical role it objectively plays—on the progressive cultural legacy left by its predecessors, becomes reactionary at a certain stage of development and begins to cling to the reactionary ideologies evolved in the past by classes which had found themselves in a similar position.

It is very important to stress that throughout the history of human society this line of succession has been opposed by the second line—the slaves—the serfs—the proletariat.

It is thus obvious that historical continuity in the development of spiritual culture, far from contradicting its class character, is directly associated with it. Any attempt to counterpose class character to continuity can only be described as a metaphysical approach to the question, for the only correct solution lies in their unity. Consequently, every new class emerging on the historical scene and negating the old system of production relations necessarily relies in its activity on past achievements in both material and spiritual culture.

It should be borne in mind that every new ruling class in antagonistic formations is an owning class. Drawing on the achievements of material culture and, on this basis, perfecting material production, it approaches the values

of spiritual culture *selectively*, from subjective class positions, taking from the cultural heritage only those elements which can help it, on the one hand, to suppress the resistance of the moribund classes and, on the other, to maintain its domination over the antipodal class that has emerged simultaneously.

Thus, in opposition to feudalism with its religious idealist outlook, the bourgeoisie evolved a new outlook based on the achievements of 17th-18th-century natural science and on the materialist tradition in philosophy. The magnificent art of the Renaissance period had its source in the art of the ancient world.

However, in the course of historical development, the relationship between the struggle against the waning classes and the struggle against the antipodal class within each antagonistic formation does not remain fixed. In the final analysis, the moribund classes must sooner or later depart from the scene. And conversely, the antipodal class, which in the early period of the new formation is very weak and constitutes a "class in itself" (for instance, the working class in the 18th century, which was not organized, had no ideology of its own and fought the enemies of its enemies) begins to make a clearer distinction between its interests and those of the ruling class and to wage a better organized struggle for its rights; in short, it becomes a "class for itself."

This change in the tasks facing the ruling class at different stages of development of one or another formation, this change in the relationship between the class forces within one or another formation provides the key to the

correct understanding of the specificity of continuity in a class society: each class inherits and develops that part of the spiritual culture of the past which is *objectively necessary* and *subjectively close* to it.

In the process of development of an antagonistic formation the ruling class gradually ceases to be progressive and its ideology changes accordingly: what is desired subjectively takes precedence over what is objectively necessary, class interests become increasingly divorced from nation-wide interests, what is progressive is replaced by what is reactionary.

At the same time the oppressed classes, as they become transformed from "classes in themselves" into "classes for themselves," strive ever more consciously to detect objectively progressive elements in the cultural heritage of the past with a view to further developing and utilizing them for the attainment of *their* class aims.

In all antagonistic formations this inevitably leads to a mounting conflict in spiritual culture between the objective progressive trends of social development and the subjective reactionary interests of the ruling classes. And since this conflict is irreconcilable in an exploiting society, the entire process of development of spiritual culture in antagonistic formations is marked by the struggle between two opposite forms of continuity — progressive and reactionary. This conflict, this *dual character of utilization of the cultural heritage in a class society*, is particularly pronounced at the imperialist stage of capitalism's development.

When the bourgeoisie was still a revolutiona-

ry class which fought in alliance with the people to overthrow the feudal system, it made a vast contribution to the treasure-store of world culture. Mankind will always be proud of the names of Giordano Bruno and Galileo, Newton and Kepler, Shakespeare and Dante, of the outstanding English and French materialist philosophers who lived and worked in the period of the early bourgeois revolutions.

The contemporary imperialist bourgeoisie praises entirely different "spiritual values"—idealism and mysticism instead of materialism, cacophony instead of classical music, mad surrealist ravings instead of realistic art...

The contradiction between the objective processes of social development and the subjective desire of the ruling classes to check social progress is strikingly evident in natural and engineering sciences.

On the one hand, rapidly expanding production imperatively demands rapid development of scientific knowledge of the microcosm, living matter, new sources of energy, outer space, etc.; bourgeois scientists are seeking answers to questions posed by practice and their efforts along this line have led to major discoveries in many fields of natural sciences and technology. On the other hand, these discoveries are frequently used for reactionary, notably militarist purposes. Under modern capitalism this conflict between the objective progressive and subjective reactionary trends in the development of culture is irreconcilable. It cannot be resolved without abolishing private-ownership relations, i.e., without socialist revolution.

3. THE SPECIFIC FEATURES OF CONTINUITY IN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT UNDER SOCIALISM

The transition from an antagonistic class society to socialism as the first phase of the communist formation results in the emergence of a fundamentally new type of social relations. Public ownership of the means of production eliminates the antagonistic character of social division of labour, thereby removing the antagonistic contradictions between different classes and social groups. Antagonism ceases to be the chief motive force of social progress, giving way to a new type of social development with new, non-antagonistic contradictions.

By freeing man of antagonistic forms of labour division the socialist revolution provides optimum conditions for more active *direct* participation of *each individual* in the creation of spiritual culture. Consequently, under socia-

lism the problem of assimilating the cultural heritage by the people acquires tremendous importance.

What criterion should be used in estimating the significance of the spiritual values created in the past?

Marxist-Leninists believe that the only criterion by which these values left to us by preceding generations can be judged is the *degree of their conformity to the objective laws of progressive social development*.

This criterion allows us to establish with adequate scientific precision not only the significance of one or another spiritual value at the time of its appearance but also define the place it holds among other cultural assets of contemporary society.

Using the *objective criterion of social progress* in analysing the history of world culture ensures the proper solution of questions related to the assessment and utilization of the cultural heritage.

It enables us, above all, to establish the progressive character of continuity in the development of the *democratic line* in world culture. In that part where the struggle of the oppressed classes for their liberation, regardless of their errors and delusions, played a progressive role in the historical development of society, the spiritual values created by the working masses over the centuries have an everlasting significance.

Thus, having arisen in the ancient Eastern countries, the ideas of protest against social inequality were subsequently taken up, albeit in an historically limited religious form, by early

Christians. Christianity, which originated among the slaves of ancient Rome, was later made to serve the ruling classes but the ideas of protest present in early Christianity were continued and developed in the revolutionary ideology of the feudal peasantry (the Jacquerie, the Hussite Wars) and even played a definite role in the proletarian revolutionary movement. Suffice it to recall the "League of the Just" with its motto: "All Men Are Brothers!" The sectarian-type utopian communism of Wilhelm Weitling and his associates, despite its religious and mystical form, played a positive part "as the first independent theoretical stirring of the German proletariat."^{*} Speaking of the historical continuity existing between the ideas advanced by the slaves of the ancient world and the ideology of the proletarian movement, one cannot but recall that at the time of its emergence the Communist Party of Germany symbolically expressed this connection by adopting the name of Spartakusbund (the Spartacus League).

Among the greatest values belonging to the people in socialist society are the epic monuments of oral poetry embodying the wisdom of centuries, people's memory of the past and everliving dreams of the future.

But whereas continuity along the line of the democratic traditions in spiritual culture is obvious and indisputable, the question concerning the culture of the preceding ruling classes is, theoretically and practically, far more complex.

Viewed in the *general sociological* plane, the

* Marx and Engels, *Sel. Works*, Vol. 2, p. 341.

history of spiritual culture is the history of the development and perfection of the entire spiritual activity (or, in other words, the entire spiritual development) of mankind on the basis of the changes taking place in material production.

Deriving from the spiritual values of bygone centuries the creative energy of human thought and labour embodied in them, people are able to use this effectively for their present-day needs, and, moreover, make it an active force for new daring thrusts into the future.

On the other hand, these assimilated material and spiritual assets of the past essentially represent only "the raw material for new production" (Marx), for the production of new cultural assets.

The necessity of retaining and preserving cultural achievements of the past compels mankind at the same time to discard certain elements of the old culture. "Men never relinquish what they have won, but this does not mean that they never relinquish the social form in which they have acquired certain productive forces. On the contrary, in order that they may not be deprived of the result attained and forfeit the fruits of civilization, they are obliged, from the moment when their mode of carrying on commerce no longer corresponds to the productive forces acquired, to change all their traditional social forms."* This applies in full measure to production in both the material and spiritual spheres: in order that they may not be deprived of the fruits of spiritual culture created earlier,

* Marx and Engels, *Sel. Correspondence*, pp. 35-36.

people are obliged to give a critical assessment to the results of intellectual activity of preceding generations and periodically subject them to thorough re-examination, as well as create new, qualitatively different forms of spiritual activity corresponding to the new socio-historical practice.

It is highly significant that the founders of Marxism never refer to "classes" when speaking of the relationships of cultural progress and the significance of continuity in this process, but invariably use phrases "people" or "new generations" (in *The German Ideology*, for example, we read: "...the sensuous world ... is an historical product, the result of the activity of a whole succession of generations, each standing on the shoulders of the preceding one, developing its industry and its intercourse."*) And this is easy to understand if it is remembered that they are speaking about the objective law operating *throughout* the history of human society and the people as a *general sociological* category.

In the same context we speak of the decisive role of the people, their productive, socio-political and spiritual activity in history, of the growing role of popular masses in social development, etc. Just as there can be no "formation in general" but only a concrete socio-economic formation, so there can be no "people in general" but only a concrete historical concept varying in scope from formation to formation.

The nation in a class society consists of clas-

* Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, Moscow, 1964, p. 57.

ses, social strata and other social groups which may be quite unlike in different socio-economic formations. But no matter how widely the popular masses in the slave, feudal and capitalist societies differed in their social composition, their core was always made up of those engaged in material production, those whose labour served as the basis for society's existence, for its political and cultural development.

Since the development of every historically determined mode of production in the material and spiritual spheres results from the activity of definite social groups varying with formations and engaged in producing material and cultural wealth, culture at each historical stage assumes a specific form, appearing as the culture of a definite socio-economic formation. "... Different kinds of spiritual production correspond to the capitalist mode of production and to the mode of production of the Middle Ages," wrote Marx. "If material production itself is not conceived in its *specific historical* form, it is impossible to understand what is specific in the spiritual production corresponding to it and the reciprocal influence of one on the other."*

As we have shown, this accounts for the class character of continuity in the development of culture in antagonistic class formations.

This also accounts for the highly revolutionary nature of approach to and assessment of

* Marx, *Theories of Surplus-Value*, Part I, Moscow, 1963, p. 276.

the cultural heritage during the socialist revolution. No earlier revolution made such a principled critical evaluation of the cultural assets inherited from preceding generations nor separated so firmly and consistently the universal values from the class elements in culture, the progressive from the reactionary.

This type of re-examination follows from the very nature of the socialist revolution, the first social revolution in the history of human society which abolishes private-ownership relations and the exploitation of man by man.

The qualitatively new type of production relations gives rise to a whole number of features typical of continuity in the development of socialist culture.

The attitude of socialist society to the cultural heritage must be viewed against the background of the new mode of material and spiritual production under socialism.

The specificity of the new mode of material production founded on public ownership accounts for the fact that the socialist system is free from the conflict between the objective processes of social development and the subjective interests of the ruling classes—a conflict inevitable in all antagonistic formations.

Far from running counter to progressive development, the class character of proletarian culture is fully in accord with this, for the working class is not bound by narrow selfish considerations in its appraisal of past cultural achievements. It is vitally interested in transforming the world, and this requires a thorough knowledge of the objective laws governing social progress.

This means that in *socialist society continuity can only be progressive in character*.

Because the objective tendencies of social progress coincide with the interests of the working masses and society consciously follows a progressive line in its cultural development, the relation between socialist culture and the cultural heritage assumes a specific character: never before did re-evaluation of the cultural assets result in such a resolute and consistent negation of everything that has outlived its day and stands in the way of social progress.

The qualitatively new, socialist type of material production calls for a qualitatively new type of spiritual culture which can emerge and develop only when there is a revolutionary re-examination of the cultural assets mankind has accumulated over the centuries.

The peculiarities of cultural progress which arise from the specific features of social progress, are at the same time a manifestation of the qualitatively new relationships following from the specific features and social functions of socialist culture itself. In order to bring out the new elements emerging in culture under socialism and, in particular, to analyse the specific character and role of continuity in cultural development, it is necessary to point out if only in brief, some fundamentally new aspects distinguishing the culture of socialist society (and, in a broader sense, the culture of the new, communist formation in general) from the culture of all antagonistic class formations.

The main distinction is that culture in a socialist society is genuinely people's culture.

The October Revolution made science and

art accessible to thousands upon thousands of young workers and peasants. In the Soviet years the number of research workers has increased more than 50 times reaching 666,200 in 1965. The training of scientific personnel in the Soviet Union proceeds at a considerably higher rate than in any of the capitalist countries. The millions of Soviet men and women who have access to the great cultural heritage are encouraged in every way to assimilate and add to the country's vast cultural wealth.

Such a rapid influx of new forces into all spheres of the cultural life of society is most gratifying. At the same time, it gives rise to certain difficulties, for it may well lead (and to a lesser or greater extent does lead) to some narrowing of the knowledge of earlier cultural achievements. This circumstance gives added urgency to the problem of assimilating the cultural heritage during the socialist cultural revolution.

Another very important distinguishing feature of socialist culture is its *humanism*.

Socialist culture is permeated with concern for man; it is profoundly humane, its main principle being: "Everything for the sake of man, for the benefit of man!"

This does not mean, of course, that the ideas of humanism are utterly alien to the spiritual culture of bourgeois society. In class society humanism remains abstract, its ideals are always limited and utopian. Such are the essentially humanist ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity proclaimed by the French bourgeois revolution. Engels wrote: "The great men,

who in France prepared men's minds for the coming revolution, were themselves extreme revolutionists. Every form of society and government then existing, every old traditional notion was flung into the lumber-room as irrational. . . Now, for the first time, appeared the light of day, the kingdom of reason; henceforth superstition, injustice, privilege, oppression were to be superseded by eternal truth, eternal Right, equality based on Nature and the inalienable rights of man.”*

How were these ideals of the bourgeois revolution materialized? We know that this kingdom of reason was nothing but the idealized kingdom of the bourgeoisie, that eternal Right found its embodiment in bourgeois justice, that equality was reduced to bourgeois equality before the law.

Nor could it be otherwise, for, in the final analysis, the aims of the bourgeoisie *as a class* were contrary to the interests of the people. That explains the irreconcilable contradiction between the ideological essence and practical tendency of the culture created by the bourgeoisie and the latter's slogans proclaimed during the revolution. Wherever the bourgeoisie came to power as a result of the revolutionary struggle of the popular masses, it “put an end to all feudal, patriarchal, idyllic relations” and replaced them by “naked self-interest” and “callous cash payment;” it “resolved personal worth into exchange value”** and established

Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1966, pp. 29-30.

Marx and Engels, *Sel. Works*, Vol. 1, p. 36.

relations completely devoid of genuine humanism.

Subjecting to a thorough analysis the ideas of humanism which originated in the pre-socialist formations as an expression of protest against the anti-humanist ideology and practice engendered by concrete forms of private-ownership relations, socialist culture infuses them with genuinely humanist content.

The last but not the least distinctive feature of socialist culture is its *collectivism*.

The only form of collectivism typical of the exploiting classes is their alliance against the working people, which is based on their common interest in maintaining their economic, political and ideological domination. But this is a purely imaginary collectivism, for while all members of the exploiting classes have the same interests insofar as they form a class against another class, they simultaneously have opposite, antagonistic interests because they compete against each other.

A product of the economic relations based on private ownership, this anti-collectivist psychology and morality assumes an especially pronounced and undisguised character under capitalism. But it is in the conditions of capitalist society that it finds its antipode in the shape of proletarian collectivism.

Having originated as part of the morality of the working class (initially in joint struggle by workers at a factory against "their" capitalist, subsequently acting jointly within the trade unions against capitalist corporations, and, finally, in the struggle waged by the proletariat as a class under the leadership of its revolutio-

nary party against the entire capitalist class), proletarian collectivism, following the triumph of the socialist revolution, gradually grew from a principle of the working class into a principle of the entire nation and, moreover, became a distinctive feature of all socialist culture.

4. SOCIALISM AND THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

LENIN ON THE APPROACH TO THE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Marxism has always regarded the cultural revolution from which emerges a qualitatively new type of socialist culture as an integral part of the socialist revolution and the building of socialism, as a *far-reaching upheaval in the spiritual life of society* effected on the basis of radical political and economic transformations. The founders of Marxism never understood spiritual culture as a sum total of achievements resulting from the intellectual activity of preceding generations but always viewed it as a creative process giving rise to spiritual values; in other words, they regarded it as an *historically concrete form of spiritual production*.

Consequently, it would be wrong to regard the socialist cultural revolution only as something that wrought changes in certain ideas,

views, notions or cultural institutions. If creative activity is the substance of spiritual culture, the history of spiritual culture cannot be reduced to the history of its diverse components, such as philosophy, ethics, art, science, etc. It cannot be denied that during the socialist cultural revolution revolutionary changes occur in society's ideology, but these are merely a *reflection* of the changes taking place in the sphere of spiritual production (changes in the relationships between the people and the individual, between physical labour and mental labour; changes in the composition and social functions of the intelligentsia; the emergence and development of collective forms of spiritual activity, etc.). These radical changes in the mode of spiritual production determine the changes in individual spheres — science, art, ethics, etc.

The unity of creativity and assimilation emerging during the formation of communist culture makes the approach to the cultural heritage an exceedingly important aspect of the socialist cultural revolution.

It is not our purpose to analyse fully Lenin's theories on socialist cultural development, since this is a separate study. We shall confine ourselves to examining the most important of Lenin's pronouncements on the attitude of the socialist revolution to the cultural heritage.

At the beginning of this century Lenin predicted that the socialist revolution would replace "capitalist production of commodities... by the socialist organization of the production of articles by society as a whole, with the object of ensuring full well-being and free, all-

round development for all its members.”* The aim of the socialist cultural revolution, according to Lenin, is to liberate man from the fetters of private-ownership relations which impede spiritual development and to mould a harmonious, fully developed personality. In the course of this revolution every individual is given, for the first time in human history, maximum opportunities to enjoy the benefits of past cultures and, what is still more important, the opportunity (not merely in the sense of offering such a *possibility* but in the sense of satisfying his need for creative activity) directly to participate in creating new spiritual assets.

Lenin stressed this point in an address to the Second All-Russia Congress of Political Education Departments in October 1921, saying: “After we had solved the problem of the greatest political revolution in history, other problems confronted us, cultural problems...”**

It would be difficult to understand the meaning of these words if culture were viewed merely as a definite form of existence and a definite system of distribution of spiritual values. Of course, when referring to “cultural problems,” Lenin had in mind the all-important task of eliminating illiteracy and greatly increasing the number of cultural and educational institutions in order to overcome Russia’s cultural backwardness which at that period was a formidable obstacle to the progress of socialist construction. To surmount this barrier it was necessary to begin from scratch, for “an illiterate person

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 6, p. 28.

** Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 33, p. 73.

stands outside politics, he must first learn his ABC.”*

The fight against illiteracy and the solution of other cultural and educational problems, however revolutionary they might be, were never regarded by Lenin as the main objective of the socialist cultural revolution, since educational tasks, albeit with insufficient consistency, could in principle be carried out in conditions of bourgeois society.

Regarding cultural transformations as an *indispensable prerequisite* for evolving a new type of culture, Lenin was far from believing that the socialist cultural revolution ended with these. He considered it not only as a radical reconstruction of the entire system of distribution and utilization of spiritual values in society but, above all, as a revolutionary transformation of the *very nature of spiritual production*, its foundations and principles, with the people *directly* participating in this creative process. Accordingly, the basic principle of cultural and educational work, as Lenin saw it, was close combination of cultural advancement and political enlightenment of the working masses. “... We cannot conduct educational work in isolation from politics,”** he stressed. Complementing the political revolution, the cultural revolution performs the function of rousing the working masses to conscious creative activity in *all* spheres of life. And the more people it involves, the more far-reaching the cultural upheaval, the more conscious and

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 33, p. 78.

** Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 31, p. 364.

effective the economic and political development of society, which is accompanied by "a rapid, genuine, truly mass forward movement, embracing first the *majority* and then the whole of the population, in all spheres of public and private life."^{*}

At the same time Lenin pointed to the inevitability of a radical change in the *social function* of culture, in its practical tendency. "In the old days, human genius, the brain of man, created only to give some the benefits of technology and culture, and to deprive others of the bare necessities, education and development," Lenin wrote. "From now on all the marvels of science and the gains of culture belong to the nation as a whole, and never again will man's brain and human genius be used for oppression and exploitation."^{**}

Making an all-round study of the question concerning the fundamental distinction between socialist culture and the culture of antagonistic class formations Lenin gave a profound theoretical elaboration of the problem concerning the *objective law of continuity* in the development of culture. When creating a qualitatively new type of culture, the socialist revolution does not discard the culture of the old society—he repeatedly stressed in his writings and speeches. Developing the views of the founders of Marxism on this subject, he made it abundantly clear that socialist culture cannot arise out of "nothing," that its appearance is prepar-

^{*} Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 25, p. 472.

^{**} *Ibid.*, Vol. 26, pp. 481-82.

ed by the whole history of human society, by the entire development of world culture.

Speaking of the approach to the culture created by capitalist society, Lenin emphasized that inasmuch as "the material basis of culture" in the epoch of capitalism is capitalist technology, commodity economy and exchange,* and inasmuch as continuity in the development of material culture determines continuity in the sphere of spiritual culture, socialism cannot successfully develop without making effective use of all the really valuable elements in the culture created by the preceding formation. "We must take the entire culture that capitalism left behind and build socialism with it," Lenin said. "We must take all its science, technology, knowledge and art."** Countering the various ultra-left "annihilators of bourgeois culture," Lenin wrote: "In order that our victory may be complete and final we must take all that is valuable from capitalism, take all its science and culture."***

Thus, Lenin made a deep analysis of the dialectical process of establishing a new culture which, on the one hand, must radically differ from the old culture and, on the other, absorb all the achievements of the latter. He attached special significance to the question of what should be taken and what should be rejected from the old culture. Assessing the culture of the pre-socialist formations, Lenin stressed the importance of drawing a line of demarcation between the elements of universal significance

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 1, p. 249.

** Lenin, *Coll Works*. Vol. 29, p. 70.

*** Ibid., p. 74.

and those engendered by the ideology and the interests of the ruling classes.

With regard to science this implied the acceptance of its objective content, its knowledge of the laws intrinsic to one or another form of the motion of matter, and a complete rejection of sundry unscientific philosophical generalizations. Lenin enjoined Soviet researchers in natural sciences consciously to adopt the positions of dialectical materialism, stressing that "no natural science and no materialism can hold its own in the struggle against the onslaught of bourgeois ideas and the restoration of the bourgeois world outlook unless it stands on solid philosophical ground."* By materialism he means here the so-called spontaneous materialism typical of all naturalists of the past.

While calling on scientists and philosophers "to wage war"*** against contemporary reactionary bourgeois philosophy and sociology, Lenin at the same time pointed out that one must not "shun an alliance"*** with those bourgeois thinkers of the past (and of the present for that matter) who can, even in the slightest degree, be used as allies (in the struggle against the religious world outlook, for example). In his article "On the Significance of Militant Materialism" written in 1922, Lenin, referring to Engels's recommendation to translate and spread among the masses the militant atheistic literature of the late 18th century, wrote: "We have not done

* Lenin. *Coll. Works*, Vol. 33, p. 233.

** Ibid., p. 236.

*** Ibid., p. 231.

this up to the present, to our shame be it said.”*
In the same article he called upon philosophers to become “materialist friends of Hegelian dialectics.”**

Lenin treated the question concerning the attitude to past achievements in art in the same dialectical way. Enthusiastically welcoming the shoots of the new, revolutionary art bringing socialist consciousness to the masses, he at the same time insistently demanded that the finest examples of art created in bygone centuries be brought within the reach of the people and enjoined Soviet artists to rely in their creative work on the progressive traditions of world realistic art.

Lenin's policy concerning monuments of the past illustrates how in a *practical way* he took into account this dialectical nature of the development of socialist culture. In the very first months of Soviet power a plan was drawn up on Lenin's initiative and with his direct participation, which envisaged the removal of some monuments of no artistic value, commemorating tsars and their favourites, and the erection of monuments to fighters for the liberation of the working people and to outstanding progressive cultural workers of the past. In 1918-19 monuments to Karl Marx, Alexander Radishchev, Taras Shevchenko, Ivan Kalyaev, Stepan Khalturin, Maximilien Robespierre, and an obelisk in honour of the finest representatives of the international revolutionary movement were erected in Moscow, and monuments to Karl

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 33

** Ibid., p. 234.

Marx, Nikolai Chernyshevsky and Georgi Plekhanov in Petrograd.

At the same time Lenin attached exceptional importance to the safeguarding of all genuinely valuable cultural monuments of the past. It was on his instructions that the restoration of the Moscow Kremlin was started in 1918. In that same year he signed decrees instituting state protection of all collections of Russian and West European painting in Moscow, Petrograd and other big cities, of libraries and book depositories, objects of scientific interest, monuments of art and antiquity in possession of private persons, societies and institutions.

In the first years following the Revolution Lenin outlined *a series of practical measures* aimed at assimilating the cultural heritage, thereby rendering inestimable service to the young Soviet Republic.

One of the essentials for effecting the socialist cultural revolution in Russia, in Lenin's view, was the elimination of illiteracy. The importance of this problem can be fully appreciated if it is remembered that on the eve of the October Revolution 87 per cent of the population in Russia were illiterate. There could be no talk of the revolutionary transformation of society as long as the problem of illiteracy remained unsolved.

For all its urgency, however, the task of wiping out illiteracy was merely a *prerequisite* for the fullest, all-round assimilation of the cultural heritage. "Our primary and most important task is to attain universal literacy, but we should in no circumstances limit ourselves to

this target," Lenin stressed. "We must at all costs go beyond it and adopt everything that is truly valuable in European and American science."*

Proceeding from the task of making the best possible use of previous cultural achievements, Lenin thought it extremely important to win over the core of the old intelligentsia. "Communism cannot be built without knowledge, technique and culture, and this knowledge is in possession of bourgeois specialists," he said. "They must be surrounded with an atmosphere of comradeship, a spirit of communist work, and won over to the side of the workers' and peasants' government."**

Such was Lenin's approach to the cultural heritage problem which was of great practical significance for building socialism in the USSR.

SOCIALISM AND THE SCIENTIFIC HERITAGE

Every new generation can succeed in practical activity only to the extent to which people use already accumulated experience and gain new experience.

Continuity in the development of mankind's practical activity forms the objective material basis of continuity in the development of scientific knowledge.

At the same time, continuity in the development of science is not only the logical consequence of the connection between theory and

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 33, p. 368.

** Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 30, p. 147.

practice; it results from the inner logic of scientific cognition itself.

Cognition is the movement from ignorance to knowledge, from incomplete, inexact knowledge to further and more exact knowledge. Consequently the process of gaining knowledge is always characterized by continuity, without which it cannot develop.

As a matter of fact, every scientific discovery, being the result of a whole series of investigations, simultaneously appears as the beginning of a new round of research work. Thus the discovery of X-rays by Roentgen led Henri Poincaré to his hypothesis of the relation between these rays and the phenomenon of fluorescence. While verifying this hypothesis, Becquerel discovered the radiation of uranium, and this, in turn, led M. and Mme. Curie to the discovery of radioactivity in a number of other elements. The theory of radioactive decay served as the starting point for a whole series of remarkable discoveries and hypotheses, many of which proved very fruitful and continue to be further developed in our day. "Science," Engels pointed out, "advances in proportion to the knowledge bequeathed to it by the previous generation."*

The connection between the scientific ideas of different epochs is obvious. Yet even this kind of connection, obvious as it is, was not always established with sufficient accuracy by subsequent generations. The eminent French scientist Dominique François Arago aptly re-

* Marx and Engels, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 1, p. 568, Russ. Ed.

marked that "the ancient peoples... ascribed the lofty deeds of many heroes to one person and, having forgotten their names, created Hercules. In the centuries since then we have not become any more sensible; in our time, too, people confuse fiction with history and create Herculean-type scientists. Nearly all the discoveries in astronomy are ascribed to Herschel, the planetary motion theory—to Laplace, while the works of D'Alembert, Clairaut, Euler and Lagrange are hardly ever mentioned. All credit for the invention of the steam engine goes solely to Watt; Chaptal is considered the only chemist who enriched the art of chemistry with ingenious and effective methods of experimentation; even in the Academy they will say that heat was never studied prior to Fourier and that he alone made more observations than all his predecessors; in a word, he alone initiated and at once completed a whole science."*

But however short the memory of those recording the history of the natural sciences, *scientists themselves* have always realized (and the greater the scientist's calibre, the clearer the realization) that scientific discoveries are the result "of the joint effort of a mass of researchers, of whom only one sometimes becomes the exponent of the ideas produced by the brainwork of many."**

The obvious existence of continuity relations between scientific ideas gave rise to the ten-

* François Arago, *Biographical Portraits of the Famous Astronomers, Physicists and Geometricians*, St. Petersburg, 1861, Vol. 1, p. 614, Russ. Ed.

** D. I. Mendeleyev, *The Fundamentals of Chemistry*, St. Petersburg, 1877, Vol. 1, p. 8, Russ. Ed.

dency of absolutizing these relations, of metaphysically divorcing the development of science from practice, its material basis.

Continuity in the development of scientific knowledge is impossible without a definite connection between ideas advanced by different generations. But this connection of ideas is deeply rooted in the objective causality relationships of the material world. The law of nature as a "form of universality in nature" (Engels) is the expression of this causality, while the law of science is its reflection. Hence, when discovering new, hitherto unknown scientific facts, connections and relations, analyzing and summarizing them, discarding the old knowledge in favour of the new, the scientist does not merely record the new logical connection of notions but reproduces the objectively existing connection, one of the relations existing in the infinitely complex system of phenomena occurring in the material world.

The negation of this fundamental dependence of logical structures on material structures and the absolutization of logical structures can only lead to idealistic conclusions.

In his *Philosophy of Science*, the neo-positivist philosopher and active member of the Vienna Circle Philip Frank devotes much space to the problem of continuity in the development of scientific knowledge. But the continuity existing between non-Euclidean and Euclidean geometry, between the theory of relativity and classical mechanics, etc., is interpreted by him from the viewpoint of subjective idealism. Euclid's geometrical conceptions, in his opinion, "are not statements about reality at all, but are

arbitrary conventions about how to use such terms as 'straight line' and 'point.'*** This brings Frank to the following conclusion: "We can say that such logical structures as geometry are true by themselves, independent of what happens in the world."***

His denial of the objective character of the laws governing the material world, on the one hand, and absolutization of logical structures, on the other, lead Frank to the idealist views with regard to continuity in the development of scientific knowledge. Inasmuch as the distinctions between old and new physical theories are purely logical in character, he argues, "if there are two possibilities, we will choose the 'simpler' — if we can find an obvious criterion of simplicity."***

The degree of absolutization of scientific knowledge and the idealist inferences associated with it also depend to a certain extent on the specific nature of one or another science.

Thus, in the process of deducing new formulas and theorems from existing ones, the mathematician who draws on the theoretical conclusions of his predecessors may, by absolutizing the significance of logical continuity, come to regard mathematics in general as a realm of pure thought totally unconnected with the spatial forms and quantitative relations of the objective world. A graphic illustration of this type of approach to mathematics is furnished

* Philip Frank, *Philosophy of Science*, New York, 1957, p. 81.

** Ibid., pp. 81-82.

*** Ibid., p. 81.

by the intuitionist school of the early 20th century (Brauer, Weyl, Heiting and others), which proclaimed (as John Locke did in his time) the intuitive cogency of each individual link of mathematical proof to be the substance of mathematical judgements and the sole criterion of their truth. The mathematization of physics, chemistry biology and other natural sciences may (and often does) give rise to diverse manifestations of "physical," "chemical," "biological" and other forms of idealism.

Of course, it would be naive to deny that scientific development is also stimulated by the desire to answer questions left unsolved by preceding generations of scientists. It is known, for example, that Mendeleyev's discovery not only stimulated the search for the elements whose existence he predicted but also required a thorough study of the causes of the recurrence of the chemical properties of known elements.

Consequently, the influence of earlier scientific development and ideas on the subsequent progress of human knowledge is indisputable. This applies equally to science as a whole and to each individual research work: every scientist must master the existing knowledge before he proceeds to the solution of any new problems.

We should like to stress that the aims and possibilities of scientific cognition do not lie *within* science itself; they are determined by the practical material requirements rather than by the theoretical evolution of mankind. This relation between material practice and spiritual activity is evident in different forms, it can be

direct and mediated, (which finds expression in the division of sciences into applied and theoretical), but this does not alter the fundamental aspect of the problem.

The applied sciences, which are concerned with solving very practical problems arising from the necessity of improving production, serve as an intermediate link between practice and the theoretical sciences. As to the development of the theoretical sciences, which at first glance does not seem to be dictated by the requirements of practice, it is, *in the final analysis*, also determined by practice. Research into the most general biological laws, for example, is dictated by the requirements of medical and veterinary science, plant breeding, etc.

In our time, which is marked by the tempestuous development of science and technology, the relative independence of the sciences and the role they play in the life of society and in material production has increased immensely. This inevitably fosters illusions about absolute independence of science. Research into the microcosm or mathematical logic first arose "independently" of the practical requirements of technical progress. Even Albert Einstein did not at first see any practical possibilities for applying his theory. Furthermore, many discoveries in theoretical physics (in nuclear physics, for instance), which seemed totally unconnected with practical requirements, paved the way to a veritable revolution in modern industrial production.

The relation between theoretical sciences and practice can be extremely complicated and

influenced by many different factors before it begins to exert a tangible influence on practical activity.

The relatively independent character of scientific cognition is demonstrated especially clearly in scientific prevision. It is commonly known, for example, that most of the elementary particles were anticipated theoretically during the practical solution of problems advanced by the inner logic of the development of theoretical physics. This does not mean, of course, that science in this case "rids" itself of its connection with practice. It should be remembered that there are different "levels" in scientific investigations: some sciences *immediately* answer practical questions, while with others, practical implementation of theory is contemplated in *more or less remote perspective*. But sooner or later all scientific achievements are put to practical use. Thus, the theory of imaginary numbers found application in the study of alternating current many years after its formulation.

It should also be noted that unscientific constructions are sooner or later discarded as being at variance with practice.

All this directly applies to the social sciences, where the relative independence of scientific knowledge is likewise manifested at every step and scientific prevision also outstrips the march of events: a thorough knowledge of the laws of social development enables one to predict the future. But this independence, too, is always relative in character: its absolutization can only lead to the unscientific conception of "self-development of ideas."

Scientific development, like any other, has two forms — evolutionary and revolutionary. Continuity in the process of evolutionary scientific development is obvious. The situation becomes more complicated when, as a result of a new scientific revolution, science is compelled to renounce conclusions formerly considered inviolable. At such moments the relativity of all human knowledge comes to the fore.

But every new revolution in science never entirely rejects the old knowledge; it critically re-examines the attained results and includes them in the new knowledge precisely for the reason "that relative truths represent relatively faithful reflections of an object independent of mankind; that these reflections become more and more faithful; that every scientific truth, notwithstanding its relative nature, contains an element of absolute truth." *

Philosophically, one of the most important results of Einstein's theory of relativity was that it put an end to Laplacian determinism which claimed that the co-ordinates and impulses of all particles in the Universe at a given instant determine its state at any past or future instant. By showing that classical mechanics is inapplicable to speeds close to that of light, Einstein demonstrated a fundamentally new approach to the history of science; he made it clear that all its basic laws are true only within definite limits. Following the discovery of quantum mechanics, Einstein's principle concerning the relative truth of the earlier established laws found new confirmation in Niels

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*. Vol. 14, p. 309.

Bohr's "correspondence principle" according to which theories, the truth of which for a given group of phenomena was experimentally proved before, do not lose their significance with the development of new scientific theories in application to the old branch of knowledge and also in particular cases of new theories.

Essentially, this idea was first expounded in Lobachevsky's geometry, which included Euclidean geometry as a particular case.

Speaking of the significance of the latest discoveries in modern physics, Marx Planck wrote: "... The new picture of the world does not replace the old picture but rather confirms it more fully, with the only difference that it adds one more specific condition to the latter. On the one hand, this condition represents a certain limitation but, on the other, produces a much more simplified picture of the world."^{*}

Bohr's "correspondence principle," in our view, is of universal significance in the sense that it regards continuity as the *basic, indispensable condition* for the progressive development of authentic and practically unlimited knowledge of universal laws.

But continuity in the sphere of scientific knowledge has its specific feature: in science there necessarily exists clearly defined continuity between preceding and subsequent investigations and discoveries.

The same relationship, although in a less pronounced form, also exists in the realm of

* Max Planck, "The Meaning and Boundaries of the Exact Sciences." Magazine *Problemy Filosofii* (Problems of Philosophy), No. 5, 1958, p. 107, Russ. Ed.

art. Continuing and developing the traditions of their predecessors, composers, artists, writers, etc., do not complete the work that remained unfinished but create their own symphonies, pictures and poems, whereas scientists, as a rule, *directly* continue the work started by their predecessors. This does not preclude, however, indirect connections in the development of science, where continuity can be both uninterrupted and interrupted in the sense that one research may be separated from another by decades and even centuries. But from the viewpoint of content rather than time, it is the immediate type of continuity that prevails in science.

It is thus only on the basis of continuity in scientific cognition that it becomes possible to establish the essential connections and relations inherent in a given object being studied; it is only on this basis that scientists can draw sufficiently well-grounded conclusions by synthesizing the earlier gained knowledge and new hypotheses and verifying the results accordingly; it is only continuity in cognition that enables scientific prevision by comparing the practical results of the old and new theories.

Extending and improving its knowledge of the objective world on the basis of the growing socio-historical experience, science is advancing towards ever more precise and thorough knowledge of the natural and social laws. Continuity in the development of our knowledge of the world is thus determined, before all, by the objective character of the very content of this knowledge. *Human notions* have, as Lenin put it, "a content that does not de-

pend either on a human being or on humanity.”*

It has already been said that absolutization of the independence of scientific cognition is bound to lead to idealistic conclusions. But there is another, equally unscientific extreme—the categorical denial of any, even relative, independence in the development of science and the association of the history of mankind’s scientific progress exclusively with requirements of material production or, even more primitively, the practice of class struggle.

The fact of the existence of vulgarizing tendencies in interpreting the relationship between the class character of culture and the continuity in the development of science calls for a close consideration of the specificity of scientific progress in antagonistic class formations, more particularly, the specificity of continuity in the development of science in a class society.

We have already pointed out that the class character of culture does not rule out continuity in its development because, for one thing, culture has an objective content which is essentially non-class and universal.

In more concrete terms, the relationship between the elements of universal significance and the class elements in science is represented below.

Every science (natural, technical or social) is primarily composed of *facts*. “Facts for the scientists are just as important as the air he breathes,” the eminent Russian physiologist

* Lenin, *Coll. Works*, Vol. 14, p. 122,

Ivan Pavlov used to say.* It is quite obvious that the factual material obtained in the process of research has an objective significance and can be used as a basis for analysis irrespective of the class allegiance or interests of one or another researcher.

It is likewise obvious that every science incorporates *laws* formulated as a result of studying extensive factual material. Reflecting the objective essential and stable causality connections and relations of the material world, these laws also have universal significance. The law of Archimedes proved to be equally true in conditions of slave society and in all the subsequent formations. There are no "bourgeois" or "proletarian" periodic, strength of materials and other laws. Consequently there is no "bourgeois" and "proletarian" physics, chemistry, mathematics, medicine or other science.

True, in asserting that the laws of science are of universal significance we must make two reservations.

In the first place, when referring to the laws of science we have in mind theoretical generalizations which reflect the *objective* connections existing in the material world, as distinct from the "laws" resulting from the scientist's self-deception or from deliberate falsification of facts (in which case the class character invades the sphere of science quite frankly). This applies to the "law" of Malthus. Marx wrote that Malthus's conclusions were intended to further the interests of the ruling classes in ge-

* I. P. Pavlov, *Sel. Works*, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1951, p. 50, Russ. Ed.

neral and of the reactionary elements of these classes in particular; it was for the sake of those interests that he falsified science.

Secondly, when speaking of the objective, universally significant content of scientific knowledge, one should always bear in mind that although there is no class physics, chemistry, biology, etc. as such, the physicists, chemists, biologists and representatives of other sciences themselves belong to definite classes and try to use scientific knowledge in conformity with definite class aims.

Furthermore, every science has definite *methods of research* which cannot be regarded as a class component of science. For example, qualitative and quantitative analysis in chemistry, methods of research applied in astronomy, medicine and other sciences have the same significance for scientists in different class structures, though here, too, the scientist's class affiliation makes itself felt quite clearly: suffice it to recall how scientists in nazi Germany conducted mass experiments on human beings "in the name of science."

Consequently, the class features in science are not facts, laws or research methods as such, but, firstly, ideological generalizations deduced from these facts, laws and methods, and, secondly, the practical application of knowledge acquired by one or another science.

Every scientist introduces into science the world outlook of a definite class. Even if he shuts himself up in an ivory tower, the scientist, in interpreting and generalizing experimental data obtained by himself or his colleagues, always stands (consciously or unconsciously)

on definite philosophical positions which, in turn, are connected in one way or another with his class consciousness, with his place and role (which he plays consciously or unconsciously) in certain social processes.

It is exactly for this reason that a prominent scientist often turns out to be a poor philosopher— a phenomenon which, though seemingly strange, is, in fact, quite natural and logical. Making an important discovery, he sometimes interprets it in the spirit of idealism, agnosticism, metaphysics or eclecticism. In this sense the use of “bourgeois science,” “bourgeois natural history” and similar terms is justified.

This leads to the conclusion that one must always be able to separate the *objective content* of a discovery made by one or another scientist from his incorrect *philosophical generalization and the desire to use the discovery for the attainment of definite practical class aims*.

The objective, universally significant content of science is always the first thing to be inherited during the growth of scientific knowledge.

But since the objectively urgent problems of social development in antagonistic class society are solved through class struggle, cognition in this society also proceeds in the forms of class consciousness. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the pre-socialist formations continuity in the sphere of scientific knowledge was not limited to the *universally* significant content of this knowledge, but was extended to diverse *ideological* components which, while forming an integral part of science, were essentially of pronounced class character. This applies, above all, to the philosophical components of science.

Thus, along with the fundamental principles of Newton's mechanics, many 18th and 19th century scientists also inherited the philosophical delusions of its author (including the "prime impulse" concept), which, while chiefly attributable to the insufficiently high level of scientific knowledge at the time, also reflected to a certain extent the ideology of definite classes.

The classics of Marxism formulated in their works two fundamentally important methodological principles determining the attitude of science in socialist society to the scientific heritage of the pre-socialist formations.

On the one hand, science in socialist society cannot develop successfully without assimilating the results of previous scientific research. This refers, first and foremost, to scientific facts which "remain even when the notions of correct facts are shown to be false."* This equally applies to scientific laws, formulas and conclusions of past centuries, and also to the earlier elaborated methods of scientific research, so far as these laws and methods are objective in character.

On the other hand, when solving the question of continuity in the development of science under socialism, one must be guided by Lenin's principle: while accepting the objective content of previous scientific discoveries it should be remembered, however, that "*not a single one of these professors, who are capable of making very valuable contributions in the special fields of chemistry, history or physics, can be trusted one iota when it comes to phi-*

Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, Moscow, 1964, p. 162

losophy,"* that these discoveries cannot be used unless the reactionary tendency is "pared off."

The foregoing enables us to bring out and formulate the specific features of continuity in the development of scientific knowledge under socialism: whereas in antagonistic class society succession in the development of scientific knowledge embraces both the objective content of this knowledge and its *class elements* (so far as the latter, even if fallacious, prove beneficial to the inheriting class), succession in the development of science under socialism is confined solely and exclusively to the objective, universally significant content of scientific knowledge.

SOCIALISM AND THE HERITAGE OF ART

What are the essential distinctions of continuity in the development of art as compared with continuity in science?

The sum and substance of these distinctions, in our view, can be briefly defined as follows: whereas in the development of science, which is a *conceptual* method of reflecting reality, *continuity in content* is of predominant significance, the development of art as a method of cognizing the world in *artistic images* presupposes, above all, *continuity in form*.

The significance of continuity in content is manifested most strikingly in mathematics,

* Lenin, *Coll Works*, Vol. 14, p. 342.

where continuity is connected with a multi-stage process of abstraction, with the axiomatic method of research. Unlike researchers in physics, cybernetics, biology or technology, who apply mathematics in their particular fields of knowledge, the mathematician does not conduct experimental work directly connected with material objects, but deals with already existing scientific material and makes his generalizations on the basis of already proven theorems. It is only natural, therefore, that continuity in this science means continuity in content, methods and symbols (mathematical language).

Continuity in content is also vitally important for all the natural and engineering sciences, although they can stand no comparison with mathematics in this respect. Every natural and technical science has two levels—empirical and theoretical. On the theoretical level it may come close to mathematics in respect of continuity. Of course, continuity also exists on the empirical level, for every researcher always relies on the experimental data obtained by his predecessors, on his own experience and on the mathematical models of one or another material object. On the whole, however, information accumulated in the past plays only an auxiliary role here. Anyway, in all natural and technical sciences we discover knowledge that is *universally significant*, and this cannot develop without close continuity links with knowledge accumulated in the past.

Continuity in form acquires particular importance in the development of art. This does not mean, however, that art has no continuity

in content. On the contrary, continuity in art is determined by the everlasting significance of some of its themes, ideas and "eternal problems." The theme of love, man's lofty mission and social duty, etc., will always appeal to people's minds and hearts. The art of every epoch solves these problems in its own way, but they keep arising again and again before each succeeding generation, demanding artistic solutions.

But whereas science is characterized by continuity of ideas, concepts, laws, categories, formulas, rules, etc., *regardless* of the form in which they are expressed, continuity in the development of art embraces not only ideas, artistic principles and esthetic norms but the *works of art themselves in their entirety*.

Outstanding works of art always represent an organic unity of content and form. That is why in the process of historical succession in art one cannot judge the value of one or another work of art exclusively by its content in complete disregard of its form (just as one cannot divorce the form of any work of art from its ideological basis). No matter how critical our attitude to the ideas of one or another writer, artist, or composer may be, we always perceive his work as a whole in its unique artistic individuality, its form and content being inseparable.

Another very important feature distinguishing the development of art from the development of science is the essentially different role played by continuity.

Whereas in science every new fundamental discovery necessitates a thorough reappraisal

of the views hitherto predominating in the given sphere of knowledge and every revolutionary upheaval often relegates the sum of old knowledge to the archives (after extracting every grain of absolute truth contained in it for inclusion in the new knowledge on a qualitatively new basis, of course), genuine works of art are immortal.

It needs hardly be said that both the content and methods of art change in the process of social development, but, once created, every work of art retains its esthetic value and, consequently, its cognitive significance, over the centuries.

This feature, which distinguishes art from science and all other forms of social consciousness, is a *manifestation of its very essence*—the reflection of reality in artistic images. By expressing the historical problems of its epoch through artistic images, art always carries universal principles and in this sense is not limited by time.

Yet another distinctive feature of continuity in the development of art is the absence of revolutions that sweep away the established traditions, as happens during technological revolutions. However radical the revolutionary changes in art, the artistic image always remains its principal means of expression.

True, from time to time there appear “innovators” who try to create a “new art” devoid of images. But by destroying artistic images they actually destroy art.

Apart from these distinctions between the continuity in art and science, which are common to all formations, there are others that are

found in the conditions of an antagonistic class society.

One of the distinctive features in the development of art in a class society is that continuity here is more *subject to the influence of the class struggle* than continuity in the development of science, notably the natural sciences. This results from the fact that the natural sciences, unlike art, are directly connected with material production.

The development of art largely resembles that of the social (economic, historical, juridical, military and other) sciences, and is directly associated with the class interests of definite social forces. For this reason continuity in art, as well as in the social sciences, is limited and contradictory.

Passing social life through the prism of the class struggle, the artist always (consciously or unconsciously) tackles definite social problems and, in conformity with his understanding of these problems, takes part in the social movements of his time. This is inevitably manifested in both the content and educational function of artistic works.

The *scientist* can work fruitfully even in seclusion, completely shut off from the outside world. The example comes to mind of the famous British scientist Sir Henry Cavendish who severed all contact with the outside world to devote himself entirely to science. His withdrawal from life did not prevent him from producing many fundamental scientific works.

In contrast, the *artist* can work only if he participates directly in social life and maintains close contact with the environment. A scien-

tist does not have to be active in public affairs to make a discovery in natural science, but every artist by the very nature of his creative activity is a social worker. This does not mean, indeed, that by devoting his life to scientific research the scientist divorces himself completely from social life. This is becoming especially obvious in our day when scientific research is playing increasingly active social role.

However, the fact remains that the scientist's connection with actual class struggle is largely indirect while the artist's connection is *direct*. All this, we believe, influences continuity in science and art, imparting a number of specific features to it.

It goes without saying that these distinctions are not absolute; they cannot be contrasted just as science cannot be counterposed to art. There is no "Great Wall of China" between the ways of reflecting the material world in the forms through artistic images and by scientific logic, for they are inseparably linked in one indivisible process of human cognition and practical activity.

This is becoming particularly evident today, when science is actively invading the sphere of art, especially literature (take, for example, works by Mitchell Wilson or Stanislav Lem). Scientific (mathematical and cybernetic) methods are being used more and more frequently these days in analysing poetry, prose, music and other arts. Scientists, in turn, are beginning to realize more clearly the esthetic aspect of their research work. Einstein discerned "elements of poetry" in the exact sciences, and Norbert Wiener, the father of cybernetics, de-

lected "powerful esthetic impulses" in mathematical research.

The interaction between scientific and artistic activity, as well as between all aspects of cultural activity is an important feature in the development of world culture, an essential condition for obtaining maximum comprehensive, all-round knowledge of the processes and laws of development in nature, society and the intellectual sphere.

This interaction between the scientific and logical on one side and the artistic and imaginative on the other, between the rational and the emotional in the cognition of the world has its advantages and disadvantages. In our day, when scientific knowledge has attained unprecedented heights, these disadvantages make themselves felt, among other things, in excessive "intellectualization" and "logicalization" of art.

Insofar as science and art, though differing in the object and method of reflection, have much in common as forms of cognition of the objective world, they possess certain common objective features of development. This circumstance led many researchers into the history of art to believe that art was absolutely independent (just as it led certain researchers into the history of science to believe in absolute independence of science from social being). This view on the development of art was most vividly manifested in the "filiation of ideas" theory in the history of literature. Divorcing the development of literature from its economic material basis, those adhering to this theory expounded the idea of self-development of "cosmopolitan" world literature—a single

stream which engulfs not only the distinctive national traits in the history of different peoples but also the class contradictions inherent in different historical epochs.

This point of view led in its time to the emergence of the so-called comparative-historical method in the history of literature, whose exponents (John B. Dunlop, Theodor Benfey and others) regarded the entire development of literature as mechanical borrowing, completely ignoring national and concrete historical factors.

Thus, Theodor Benfey, a prominent 19th-century German philologist, claimed in his *History of Linguistics and Oriental Philology in Germany* and other works that Indian literature was the only source of all the fairy-tails of world literature.

In Russian literature the "filiation of ideas" theory is closely associated with the names of Alexander and Alexei Veselovsky. Employing the method of abstract formal comparison, the two brothers reduced the rich variety of works created by diverse national literary schools to a limited number of traditional "migratory subjects" and to endless "interinfluences" and "borrowings." Alexei Veselovsky's book *Western Influences in Modern Russian Literature* is very indicative in this respect. Proceeding from the preconceived, fallacious idea of the "universal existence in different periods, of literary schools with a similar programme varying only in national nuances," its author ascribes to every nation a "period of wholesale imitation."

Actually the development of the art of

each nation and, accordingly, the work of each artist and writer is based not on foreign influences but rather on internal national and concrete historical factors. The real source and the basis of successful progressive development of spiritual culture are deeply rooted in the life of the people. As to the cultural influence of other peoples, however beneficial its effect, it never plays a decisive role, each nation perceiving the achievements of other nations in its own, "national" way.

At the same time (as we have shown above in relation to science), inability to grasp the essence of art as a specific means of reflecting reality and attempts to ignore the specificity of the development of art as a form of social consciousness possessing a certain, albeit relative, degree of independence, lead some researchers to primitive, vulgar interpretation of the laws governing the development of art to counterposing its class character to continuity.

This conception of art appeared in Soviet literary and art criticism in the 1920s, when V. M. Fritche, a prominent Soviet expert in the history of literature and art, tried to establish certain direct dependence of the totality of artistic methods and techniques on the level of production and the nature of the socio-economic system. Claiming the existence of a certain law which "always entitles an economically advanced country to assume leadership in the realm of art," Fritche believed that the entire creative activity of an artist resulted from his class attitude.

Moreover, trying to prove at all costs that art always and predominantly expressed the

interests of definite classes and social groups, Fritche even made the range of colours used by an artist dependent on his class position. "The colour gamut varies... with the social class or social group whose being and consciousness finds expression in the artist's work" he wrote. "The yellow background prevailing in works by Velasquez in his portraits of the royal family is the colour of gold toned down to harmonize with the decline of Spanish absolutism."*

In his struggle against idealistic concepts of art Fritche stressed the significance of an artist's class position. But treating this problem in a simplified way, he regarded literature only as a "form of class struggle," made the development and transformation of the various genres of art directly dependent on the economic development of society and primitively associated the creative work of an artist with his class position and even class origin. As a result he arrived at very naive conclusions. Fritche believed, for example, that proletarian poetry "can be created only by worker-poets or by poets from among former workers."**

Such a simplified treatment of the problem related to the development of art leads to a conclusion that the art heritage of the past is absolutely unacceptable to the practice of socialist art and literature.

* V. M. Fritche, *Sociology of Art*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1926, pp. 186-187, Russ. Ed.

** V. M. Fritche, *Proletarian Poetry*, Moscow, 1918, Russ. Ed.

When analysing the methodological principles of such a simplified anarchist attitude to the art traditions, it is necessary to note first of all the absolute untenability of all attempts to counterpose continuity to class character in art.

It has already been shown that class character and continuity in the development of spiritual culture presuppose rather than rule out each other. It is true of all spheres of spiritual culture, in particular science.

How does the class character of continuity in the development of art manifest itself in the pre-socialist formations?

Workers in art of the new classes which replace the preceding dominant classes always rely, either consciously or unconsciously, on the art traditions of the departing classes, fully or partially accepting them when seeking solutions for definite social problems. Adding something new to the content and form of art, depicting life from the positions of their class, these artists found themselves inevitably influenced to a certain extent by the previous ideas and methods; in other words, they inherit not only the universally significant content but also the class tinge of the earlier art, its more or less pronounced class tendency.

Paying tribute to the established traditions, they find themselves influenced by the culture (class culture!) of the departing class. Thus, Greuze's major compositions asserting the ideals of the third social estate as a counterweight to the art of the aristocracy, were largely marked by conventional and sentimental features typical of 18th-century French art.

This class touch in continuity in the development of art always depends on the level of class consciousness of the artists advocating the ideology of the new classes. In the early period of a new antagonistic formation this continuity, as a rule, is still uncognized, the class element here forces its way despite the artist's will and it is sometimes necessary to go several centuries back from his works to be able to discover and explain their class motives. For instance, it requires a certain amount of effort to understand why the art of Terborch, an outstanding 17th-century Dutch painter, has many features in common with Velasquez. Only analysis of the concrete historical conditions attending the development of capitalist relations in the Netherlands of that epoch suggests the conclusion that the ties between Holland's big and petty bourgeoisie were far weaker than those between Dutch big bourgeoisie and the feudal aristocracy of Spain.

But besides this largely uncognized continuity there also exists direct continuity between the art of the outgoing and the nascent classes, which is realized from the positions of certain classes and expresses their ideological and psychological affinity. The new art sometimes consciously takes up the colours of the departing class, thereby displaying its continuity with the latter. In the opening part of this century, for example, B. Musatov, K. Somov and some other Russian artists tended to revive the empire style in their paintings, thus reviving the cultural and artistic ideals of the aristocracy.

Lastly, apart from the variety of class tend-

encies in *positive* continuity in art we also find diverse class manifestations in *negative* continuity, when the artist resolutely dissociates himself from earlier established art canons and opposes the old art with a new one fundamentally different in both content and form. But in art negative continuity of this type is undoubtedly of less significance than in science.

However strongly the class allegiance of one or another artist may manifest itself in continuity and whatever forms this continuity may assume, the main thing in the art heritage is its universal humanistic essence. This makes it possible to hand down the cultural heritage from generation to generation, from century to century. In the final analysis, mankind sooner or later separates the universal essence from class elements in the cultural heritage and establishes the actual value of the works of art, the criterion being their universal humanistic content.

That is why we must not exaggerate the significance of class elements in the development of art and oppose them to continuity.

Marxist researchers proceed from the premise that the development of art is a dialectical process which is impossible without constant renewal, without endless changes in content and form. The renewal and changes are, however, inconceivable without inheriting the esthetic principles and methods in which mankind's artistic experience is concentrated, i.e. without a stable tradition.

It is impossible properly to assess the actual value of the art heritage to new generations

and, consequently, to understand the basic trends in the development of the new, socialist art, without considering the dialectical relationships between tradition and innovation.

Traditions evolved during a long process of development of art comprise: 1) elements characteristic of this form of social consciousness (definite esthetic principles, concrete creative methods, etc., which are common to different peoples in different historical periods); 2) elements typical of specific national forms in art, which are handed down from one generation to another within the nation; 3) elements arising from the existence of definite trends in art.

These elements of the art traditions developing over long periods, sometimes over centuries, form an aggregate of relatively stable characteristics which influence people's consciousness and emotions because of their stability.

Tradition in art plays a progressive role when it operates in keeping with the development of progressive tendencies promoting the solution of current problems in art. It goes without saying that tradition in this case, however, deeply rooted in antiquity, is modified to meet the requirements of the new historical epoch and acquires new features.

It is exactly for this reason that Soviet literary and art criticism most resolutely rejects diverse "ultra-left", vulgar-sociological arguments purporting to prove that art traditions have a "pernicious effect" on socialist art.

The appeal to renounce the old art traditions of pre-socialist formations because of

"class irreconcilability" in order to bring about a qualitatively new, "proletarian" culture is nothing but revolutionary phrase-mongering. Actually, this demand is reactionary in nature, for its realization would have undoubtedly retarded the development of socialist art.

Its reactionary nature is quite easy to see if it is remembered that certain elements common to a whole society have always existed in antagonistic class formations. However conflicting the class interests, every nation has a number of common, specifically national features in both the content and the form of its culture.

The national specificity in the *content* of culture is primarily perceived in the fact that works of art depict the conditions under which a nation lives. In speaking of the national *form* of culture, we have in mind the language, the national character as determined by the specific mode of life, the original national art traditions, customs, etc. These factors make their mark on culture in general and on literature and art in particular. N. G. Chernyshevsky, an outstanding Russian revolutionary democrat, wrote to this effect: "No good novel or story can do without local colour, without a national element in the characters. Without local colour, national customs, ideas or national traits there is nothing tangible about the characters."*

To follow tradition in art means to develop everything progressive in the *content* of earlier art. This also means the use of existing artistic

* N. G. Chernyshevsky, *Coll. Works*, Gospolitizdat, Moscow, 1949, Vol. 12, p. 129, Russ. Ed.

forms, national in character, which is yet another highly important specific feature of continuity in art as distinct from continuity in scientific knowledge where national aspects do not play any role in general. These forms are not blindly copied but rather adapted to the new tasks and requirements of social life, discarding everything that does not meet the new criteria of artistic value and, at the same time, assimilating and creatively developing those elements of the art heritage which continue to retain their emotional power in the new conditions. Only an artist firmly standing on his native soil and having common interests with his people is capable of making such a critical choice. He will know from experience *what* exactly should be taken from the old art and *how* it should be used to avoid disharmony with the epoch.

For example, one of the most important traditions in Russian literature, which today has lost none of its significance (and not for Russian literature alone), is *the tradition of socio-psychological analysis*.

The emergence of this tradition is rightly attributed by Soviet critics to the historically determined specificity of 19th century Russian literature and Russian culture as a whole.

As distinct from the West-European countries, the past century for Russia was marked not only by the establishment of capitalist relations but also by historical developments which subsequently led to the emergence of a new, socialist society. The new, pressing problems that arose in the course of the revolutionary development in Russia made their mark

on every aspect of Russian spiritual culture, literature included. The problem of revolution became the central problem of Russian literature. It finds its artistic expression primarily in depicting man and his environment, his self-assertion and his opportunities.

This explains the immense role of socio-psychological analysis in Russian literature. Analysis in general, and socio-psychological analysis in particular, is the living heart of realism; its sum and substance in Russian classical literature consists of declaring irreconcilability of the human personality to slavery, as well as of demanding restoration of human dignity and choosing the paths leading to or from this goal.

This tradition should be encouraged and fostered in every way.

When speaking of the significance of continuity in the development of the national *form* of art, as noted by Chernyshevsky, one should not interpret this in too naive a way, for national form is not something immutable. True, the form is not subject to such precipitous changes as the content, but at times rather radical transformations do take place. These changes are especially noticeable when we analyse the art of grand masters who boldly and resolutely discard the traditional methods and techniques and blaze new trails for whole generations of followers.

On the face of things, the first creative steps of revolutionary innovators (such as Goya, Wagner, Brecht, Mayakovsky) may look like a complete renunciation of all classical canons and national forms evolved over centuries. But this view is erroneous, for every one of these

artists, drawing on centuries-old traditions and experience of the classics, was able to find new forms and bring out entirely new, unexplored possibilities latent in the cultural treasure-store of *his people*.

What, then, is inherited by socialist art from mankind's past art experience?

First, *the progressive artistic and esthetic ideas* contained in national and world art.

Second, *the creative realistic traditions*.

The entire history of art shows that realism, whether it be the art of the Russian *Peredvizhnik*i or of the *Sturm und Drang* period, stores unlimited possibilities, for it does not blindly copy the reality but discerns entirely new features in it and finds better forms for asserting the new.

Third, *techniques and methods of creative work*.

We shall illustrate this by the following example. The latter half of the 19th and the early 20th centuries were marked by important achievements in painting technique. The works by Monet, Cézanne and Matisse opened new prospects in achieving artistic expressiveness. Naturally, no artist in our time should ignore the methods and techniques of these masters—they must be thoroughly studied and applied in his work.

Fourth, *the national art traditions* which continue to develop and fully retain their significance in the art of the socialist nations.

Highly indicative in this respect is the work of many artists in Soviet Georgia who extensively use the valuable experience accumulated by folk craftsmen over the centuries in cera-

mic and metal chasing, thus reviving ancient national art in new forms.

The last but not the least point is that socialist art inherits *the works of art* as invaluable relics of the culture of bygone centuries—Rublyov's frescoes, Rembrandt's canvases, Rodin's sculptures, Leger's ceramics, Petrarch's sonnets and Byron's poems, Beethoven's symphonies and Chopin's mazurkas. . .

Contemporary life poses before writers, artists and musicians entirely new problems. The most important of these is to contribute in every way to the revolutionary transformation of the world. Socialist art cannot therefore confine itself to the old esthetic principles, artistic standards and techniques. The new tasks call imperatively for new, bold solutions, quests and experiments.

These new tasks made it necessary to evolve a fundamentally new method of artistic portrayal of reality—the method of socialist realism, which has the following distinctive features: while meeting the requirements of the concrete historical period of social development—the period of socialist construction, it has close links of continuity with the entire realistic trend in the development of world art.

This explains the ceaseless struggle waged by socialist art against the tendencies of utilizing the art heritage by blind copying, imitating and borrowing, as well as against formalistic renunciation of the achievements of classical art and nihilist rejection of the realistic traditions of the past.

The quests for the new, which are organically combined in socialist art with the development

of the old realistic traditions, enrich the method of socialist realism. Developing these realistic traditions, socialist art introduces qualitatively new elements into world culture. Theoretically, it is the novelty of the ideological concepts of socialist realism, while practically, it is the portrayal in different artistic forms and genres of the spiritual world of the new man that is being moulded by the rising communist society.

5. CERTAIN PROBLEMS OF CONTINUITY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIALIST CULTURE AT THE PRESENT STAGE

To make a more comprehensive analysis of the specific features of continuity in the development of socialist culture at the present stage it is necessary not only to examine it in its historical aspect but also to discover how it reveals itself in interaction between the cultures of different peoples belonging to the *same historical epoch*.

The disadvantage of analysing continuity exclusively in the historical aspect is that such analysis disregards the fundamentally new phenomena arising as a result of *interaction between the cultures of the socialist nations* both within a multinational socialist state and in the socialist world system as a whole. Such analysis glosses over the fact that in the con-

temporary epoch continuity also exists in the *cultural interaction between the socialist and the non-socialist countries*. An exclusively retrospective examination of the interrelation between socialist culture and the culture of present-day bourgeois society is untenable both in theory and practice because ignoring an analysis of their interrelation in the sphere of continuity would lead to a denial of the need to use the progressive elements of contemporary bourgeois culture. Since at a certain stage in history capitalism and communism (that is its first stage—socialism) coexist, then communism, which is the future of mankind, must take everything valuable from the past, from the last stage of the capitalist formation. Here, the existence of continuity is quite obvious.

The relationship between socialist and contemporary bourgeois culture presents an extremely complex and contradictory picture. Existing in the same historical epoch, they do not merely “coexist” but enter into a definite interaction.

Before we proceed to examine the sum and substance of the interaction between the cultures of the two worlds, a brief definition of the term “interaction” seems advisable. When speaking of the interaction between two cultures, we proceed from the generally accepted *philosophical* meaning of this concept, namely, interaction as connection between phenomena in the process of their development. Moreover, the reference is to the *dialectical*, i.e. contradictory interaction. One need not be well versed in philosophy to know that social contradictions can be both *antagonistic* and *non-antagonistic*

in character. The same is true of interactions. In a certain sense, one can speak of the interaction between the two opposite social systems, having in mind that the peaceful coexistence of these systems constitutes a specific form of the class struggle at the present stage of social development—a struggle which decides the historical destinies of capitalism and communism. But sharp though it may be, interaction is not ruled out for it is a direct consequence and manifestation of this struggle.

When speaking of the interaction of the two cultures, we refer primarily to the *struggle* between them.

The ideological content and social functions of socialist and bourgeois cultures are opposite.

Socialist ideology is an anti-capitalist ideology. Its main content and theoretical basis is Marxism-Leninism—a revolutionary teaching founded on the theory of scientific communism.

The ideology of the imperialist bourgeoisie rests on anti-communism which permeates politics and law, ethics and art, science, philosophy and education. Inasmuch as in contemporary bourgeois society (as in any other antagonistic formation) the culture of the ruling class is the dominant culture, the ideology of the ruling class is accordingly the dominant ideology. Hence the attempts of the ideologists of anti-communism to take advantage of the coexistence of states with differing social systems and their cultural ties in the struggle against communism.

The following excerpt from *Cultural Relations and US Foreign Policy*, a book written by Ch. A. Thomson and W. H. Laves, is very revealing in this respect:

"In relations with the communist countries cultural activities play a role of unique importance, since they are almost the only practicable means of penetrating the Iron Curtain. The more we can do this, the more we can learn about Soviet strengths and weaknesses, and the better chance we have of introducing realistic and moderating currents into Soviet thinking and Soviet policies."*

The authors of the book deem it necessary to dwell on the tasks which, in their view, face the US government in the sphere of cultural contacts with the USSR. "US policy toward the USSR," they write, "has two primary objectives. We seek first to withstand and counter the destructive aspects of Soviet foreign policy and to strengthen our defenses against their attacks upon democracy and the free world. We seek also to further such modifications of Soviet philosophy and policy as will make possible harmonious cooperation with them... Cultural relations contribute to both of these objectives..."**

Much the same views are expressed in another book, *The Idea Invaders*,*** whose authors likewise stand on the positions of anti-communism but, unlike Thomson and Laves, are far less optimistic. They write quite frankly that American propaganda has no positive ideal or

* Ch. A. Thomson, W. H. Laves, *Cultural Relations and US Foreign Policy*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1963, p. 163.

**Ibid., pp. 168-169.

*** G. Gordon, J. Falk, W. Hodapp, *The Idea Invaders*, New York, 1963.

"national aim" capable of winning the sympathy of broad sections of public opinion. Citing the opinions of prominent cultural leaders of different countries criticizing the American way of life, Gordon, Falk, and Hodapp discern one more aspect in the extension of US cultural contacts: "If the 'image' of America is to be improved in the minds' eyes of the millions upon millions of people overseas who think ill of us at present, we must, as a nation, take notice of the attitudes of these millions and listen to them with a sympathetic ear.

"The United States needs an *Ear of America*—a governmental or private agency which will match, if not in resources at least in missionary zeal and breadth of operation, the effort that the current voices of America put forth. Its aim should be the importation from abroad of all that is worth-while in foreign culture, education, and political life. . . ."

But can the whole problem of the interaction between two cultures be regarded *exclusively* as the ideological struggle?

Such an approach to the question would mean a departure from Lenin's statement on the need to make the maximum use of the "technological and cultural gains achieved by the biggest capitalism." Or, is it to be presumed that these words are applicable only to the capitalism that existed prior to the 1920s? There is every reason to believe that they fully apply to modern capitalism and its culture. But in order to understand them correctly it is necessary to

* G. Gordon, J. Falk, W. Hodapp, *The Idea Invaders*, New York, 1963, pp. 227-28.

draw a clear line of distinction between the concepts of "culture" and "ideology."

We have already pointed out in the chapter "The Specific Features of Continuity in Cultural Development in Antagonistic Class Formations" that the concepts of "culture" and "ideology" are not identical, that "culture" is a broader concept than "ideology," if only for the reason that natural and technical sciences, some of whose components do not bear a class character, form an integral part of culture. Natural science is, in essence, international because its conclusions and achievements can be used by any people, by various classes in any historical epoch. To what extent the level of economic and cultural development permits the use of scientific achievements and how the prevailing production relations in one or another country determine the tendency in the application of these achievements is a different matter. Anyway the *possibility* of applying the achievements of natural science is always present irrespective of concrete historical conditions.

Hence, while emphasizing the antagonistic nature of socialist and bourgeois culture in ideology and social functions, while stressing the need to *fight* all that is reactionary in bourgeois culture, we must not confuse the concepts of "bourgeois culture" and "bourgeois ideology." The struggle against the reactionary content of contemporary bourgeois culture does not rule out but rather presupposes critical analysis and utilization of all its valuable and useful elements.

At the same time it should not be forgotten that "bourgeois culture" is a far narrower con-

cept than "the culture of bourgeois society," that they are mutually related as a part and a whole, for the culture of bourgeois society embraces not only the dominant culture but also more or less developed elements of democratic and socialist culture.

As regards approach to the cultural heritage and to the culture of contemporary bourgeois society, Marxist-Leninists now have to contend with two equally erroneous tendencies—revisionism and dogmatism—running counter to the theory and practice of Leninism.

The sum and substance of the revisionist approach to cultural continuity consists in ignoring the irreconcilability of the socialist and bourgeois ideologies and advocating the theory of a "peaceful synthesis" of socialist and bourgeois cultures.

Henri Lefèbvre, for example, reasons thus: inasmuch as the thesis on the opposite character of the socialist and bourgeois cultures follows from the thesis on the opposite character of the socialist and bourgeois ideologies, the latter logically following from the thesis on the struggle between the two systems, Marxists, who have pronounced themselves in favour of peaceful coexistence, must consequently renounce the thesis on the opposite character of the two cultures.

This argument is in glaring contradiction to the fact of the interaction between the two cultures, to the principal aspect of this interaction—the irreconcilability of the socialist and bourgeois ideologies, for there is not any "third ideology."

The question can be posed only thus: while

cooperating with the capitalist countries in the sphere of culture and taking all that is really valuable from the culture of preceding generations and from contemporary bourgeois culture, Marxism must continually fight against all the reactionary elements of this culture.

While opposing the revisionist approach to the problems of ideological work in present-day conditions, Marxism-Leninism resolutely rejects a dogmatic approach to the cultural heritage and to the culture of contemporary bourgeois society, because such an approach is a direct consequence of vulgarization of the basic Marxist-Leninist propositions on this question. Dogmatism in its most extreme and odious form is shown in the theory and practice of the leaders of the Communist Party of China.

The "great proletarian cultural revolution" policy proclaimed by the CPC leadership at the close of 1965 and officially endorsed by the 11th Plenary Meeting of the CPC Central Committee (August 1-12, 1966), can only be regarded as a revision of the Marxist-Leninist teaching on the socialist cultural revolution from the "left" positions. Affecting all the basic principles of the Marxist-Leninist theory on the cultural revolution this revision is demonstrated most strikingly in the approach to the problem of cultural heritage.

Many official documents and political measures undertaken by the CPC leadership make it abundantly clear that the Chinese People's Republic has openly embarked on a path of completely rejecting, along with the classical cultural heritage of their own country and the cultural gains of other nations (including the

achievements of contemporary bourgeois culture), the entire cultural wealth accumulated by the countries of the socialist world system, primarily by the peoples of the USSR, in the process of socialist cultural revolutions.

Continuity then, in the dialectical interaction of two cultures, has two aspects:

On the one hand, socialism must take from the culture of other countries all that is progressive and would benefit socialist culture.

On the other, while critically reappraising and assimilating all that is valuable and progressive in the culture of contemporary bourgeois society, socialist culture itself influences the cultural development of other peoples.

This impact of progressive socialist culture on the minds and hearts of men in all parts of the world will grow in direct proportion to socialism's successes and achievements in all spheres of life.

CONCLUSION

Since the origination of the materialist view on history a tense struggle has been going on in sociology between two mutually exclusive conceptions of the cultural-historical process.

The materialist conception of the sociology of culture proceeds from the premise that material production forms the basis of the spiritual life of society. From this it draws the objective conclusion that the role of the masses in all spheres of social life continues to grow and connects closely the spiritual emancipation of the individual in the cultural revolution with the economic and political liberation of the working masses.

This genuinely scientific and consistently revolutionary conception is counterposed by the

idealist conception which already in the 19th century was meeting strong opposition and which is still being fought relentlessly today. Regarding culture as the product of some mysterious ideal substance, the proponents of this conception deny the creative role of the popular masses in the development of spiritual culture and execrate, as something utterly alien and contrary to the "very spirit" of culture, any attempt to solve the problem of culture in a revolutionary way.

It is probably true to say that the substance of the idealist conception of culture (and the practical conclusions following therefrom) was formulated most clearly by the prominent reactionary philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev in his book *Philosophy of Inequality*.

Addressing his "opponents in social philosophy" in Russia, Berdyaev was predicting the inevitable collapse of culture as a result of the socialist revolution. Unlike many other ill-starred "prophets" of this type, however, he tried to substantiate his prediction theoretically by his own "philosophic conception of culture." He maintained that:

1. "Culture is religious in its origin and mission";

2. Primacy in social development belongs to culture, for "it is not through politics or economics but through culture that the aims of society are attained";

3. "Culture is of noble origin," and "democratization tends to lower the quality and value of culture";

4. "All attempts to resolve the crisis of cul-

ture by revolutionary means from below are sheer nonsense.”*

In his letter to the leaders of Soviet Russia Nikolai Berdyaev wrote: “Inwardly, none of you appreciates culture or deeply loves it as an intrinsic part of his own value and wealth. Culture was created by people utterly alien to you in spirit. There is nothing in the lofty monuments of culture that can fill you with awe. You will readily destroy all the monuments and values created by great ancient cultures for the sake of utilitarian aims, for the benefit of the masses. It is high time your equivocal attitude to culture was exposed. You are unable to create a new culture because it is generally impossible to create a new culture by severing all links of continuity with the old one... Socialism cannot evolve a new type of culture.”**

In citing these quotations we pursued two aims: to acquaint the reader with the *theoretical* arguments of the opponent in his own words and to give a graphic illustration of the complete *practical untenability* of the idealist conception of the sociology of culture.

It is quite natural that by abolishing the exploiting classes the socialist revolution did away with the continuity connections built up for centuries *against* the people by the aristocratic sections of society. But in doing so it relied on the immeasurably deeper and incomparably more durable connections evolved in the course

N. Berdyaev, *Philosophy of Inequality*, pp. 217, 225-26, 229-30, Russ. Ed.

Ibid., p. 220

of human history which form the underlying basis of the entire cultural-historical process, namely, on the continuity in the creative activity of the masses—the real producer of all material and spiritual wealth.

The experience of cultural development in the USSR and the other socialist countries fully confirms the correctness of the materialist sociology of culture: the radical economic and political transformations carried out in the socialist countries have brought into being a new socialist culture qualitatively differing from all previous cultures in content and social functions—the culture which, contrary to Berdyaev, is not only new but incomparably higher in content and form. This is an objective fact which even the ideological opponents of socialism have to admit.

“The Russians have sown the seeds and are now reaping a truly amazing harvest,” the prominent Belgian public leader and industrialist Baron Kronacker wrote after a visit to the Soviet Union. “Their country has made an unprecedented leap in its development... These successes are not limited to the steep rise in the national standard of living. They testify to a profound cultural upheaval embracing all sections of the population.”*

“Foreign observers have always been impressed by many things in the Soviet Union, but the progress of Soviet science and the part it plays in Soviet society today are more than astounding,” zoologist Dobzhansky of Columbia University writes in the magazine *Science*. “The

* *Pravda*, January 11, 1960.

Land of Soviets is the centre of world culture,"* say Turkish scientists. "I witnessed the blossoming of culture,"** declares Jean-Paul Sartre.

Socialist reality effectively refutes the "prophecies" of Nikolai Berdyaev and his ilk.

Yet there is something in Berdyaev's concern over "the world crisis of culture" and its destiny, which is expressed in similar terms by Oswald Spengler in his book *Decline of the West*, that oversteps the narrow bounds of reactionary class disquisitions. It is easy to discern in them a particle of objective truth: the development of culture in antagonistic class formations is indeed a process which is fraught with truly disastrous consequences for culture.

The alienation of culture from its immediate creator and the "aristocratization of culture" (to use Berdyaev's terminology) in the pre-socialist formations inevitably give rise to a sharp conflict between culture and its social basis, between a small stratum of the intelligentsia and the popular masses which are denied *direct* participation in the cultural-historical process.

These contradictions, particularly the contradiction between the social basis of culture in capitalist society and its socially exclusive character, reach their culmination in the epoch of imperialism, when the scientific and technological revolution has given the worker more free time by considerably reducing his working hours and the vast expansion of communications (the press, radio, cinema, TV, etc.) has immea-

* *Izvestia*, June 4, 1962.

** *Pravda*, June 21, 1962.

surably increased the utilization of cultural values.

The situation in which the people are alienated from culture and the ruling classes are bent on perpetuating this alienation inevitably breeds what may be called "mass culture," which debases taste and increasingly threatens the achievements of classical and modern culture which are alleged "inaccessible for the people."

Bourgeois sociologists (G.P. Friedmann, H.L. Wilensky, D. McDonald, G. Greenberg, P. Lazarsfeld and others) try to examine the problems of "mass culture" from the viewpoint of the "industrial society theory." Daniel Bell, Professor of Sociology at Columbia University, tries to convince his readers that "mass culture" is destined to play the decisive role in mankind's spiritual development. "Thanks to the mass means of communication," he writes in the magazine *America*, "American society is being increasingly united into a single whole. Everything that used to be the exclusive possession of the upper classes has now become common property."

Marxist researchers into the cultural evolution of society in the epoch of imperialism regard "mass culture" as a direct and very vivid expression of the contradictions characteristic of a society in which the material and cultural wealth, instead of being placed at the service of man, stands opposed to him as an alien and hostile force. "Mass culture" vulgarizes culture and emasculates its humanistic content, causing universal regression of art, artistic tastes and cultural requirements. It reflects and also cultivates and stabilizes the given level of mass

taste, trying to keep mass consciousness at an "average level." Oriented on society's inertness rather than on its dynamism, it presupposes and fosters the consumer's attitude to existing realities, thereby breeding passivity and indifference.

Only in this respect were Spengler and Berdyaev "right" when they expressed concern over the "world crisis of culture."

Thus, the actual contradictions in spiritual culture of the epoch of capitalism proved to be mystified, and this led the author of *Philosophy of Inequality* to ultra-reactionary conclusions, to denying the possibility of creating a new culture qualitatively differing from its predecessor. But the experience of socialist cultural development in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries proves beyond doubt that the liquidation of capitalism inevitably puts an end to all its manifestations in the spiritual life of man.

Viewed from this angle, the socialist cultural revolution appears as a process having two sides: genuine democratization of culture and a radical change in the role and place of culture in the life of each individual.

The culture created through revolutionary transformations in the spiritual life of nations that have taken the path of socialism qualitatively differs from that of any pre-socialist formation. This difference is not only in the unprecedentedly rapid development of mass education and enlightenment but *primarily* in the emergence of a *qualitatively new type of spiritual production*, of qualitatively new relations in all spheres of the people's spiritual activity on the basis of a radical reorganization of the

economic, political and ideological pattern of social life.

Representing an objectively necessary and higher stage in the development of world culture, socialist culture eliminates the one-sidedness and limitations imposed by the private ownership of the means of production. It creates favourable conditions for the people to enjoy the achievements of world culture and gradually converts the working masses into direct architects of culture, into active participants in the cultural historical process.

The conclusion is fully justified that the revolutionary upheaval in spiritual life effected by the peoples of the socialist world acquires a truly international significance.

Guided by the experience of the Soviet cultural revolution and discerning in it a real opportunity to solve the key problems of cultural development in their own countries, the peoples of the socialist world are making continuous progress. Their example shows convincingly that the vast experience accumulated by the USSR and the other socialist countries in the sphere of cultural development vividly reflects many common features and problems that will inevitably confront *all* upcoming socialist cultural revolutions.

It is now clear that the cultural revolution carried out during the building of socialism and communism eliminates the basic contradictions between the people's labour activity and spiritual requirements. It creates conditions enabling the people to become the architects of culture *thereby putting the culture of the masses in opposition to "mass culture."* This pro-

cess has already begun and will continue at an accelerated rate as socialist culture gradually grows into communist culture.

Absorbing all the best elements of world culture, the culture of communist society brings the great cultural heritage of preceding generations within the reach of all and enables every individual actively to participate in enriching and increasing this heritage for the benefit of coming generations

Е. Баллер

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на английском языке

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